■ LIFESTYLE/C1
Fil Delacruz's 'kenotic, kinetic art'

■ INFOTECH/B6
Obscene Kama Sutra worm targets vulnerable PCs

■ SPORTS/A26
RP's Jimrex Jaca also scores KO victory in Las Vegas undercard

■ BUSINESS/B1
30% of VAT proceeds to go to government infrastructure projects

Pacquiao's trunks worth an estimated P5 million

By Nikki Valera

MANNY PACQUIAO MORE THAN'S WORTH AT least P5 million for his ringlife load with Mexican Erik Morales yesterday.

Pacquiao, who endorses products ranging from socks and laundry detergent to pharmaceuticals, was yielding advertising space on his shorts for as much as P1.5 million a patch.

PACQUIAO'S A11

email feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, January 23, 2006 ## 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 46 P10 website www.inq7.net

'Hello Manny' text message circulates

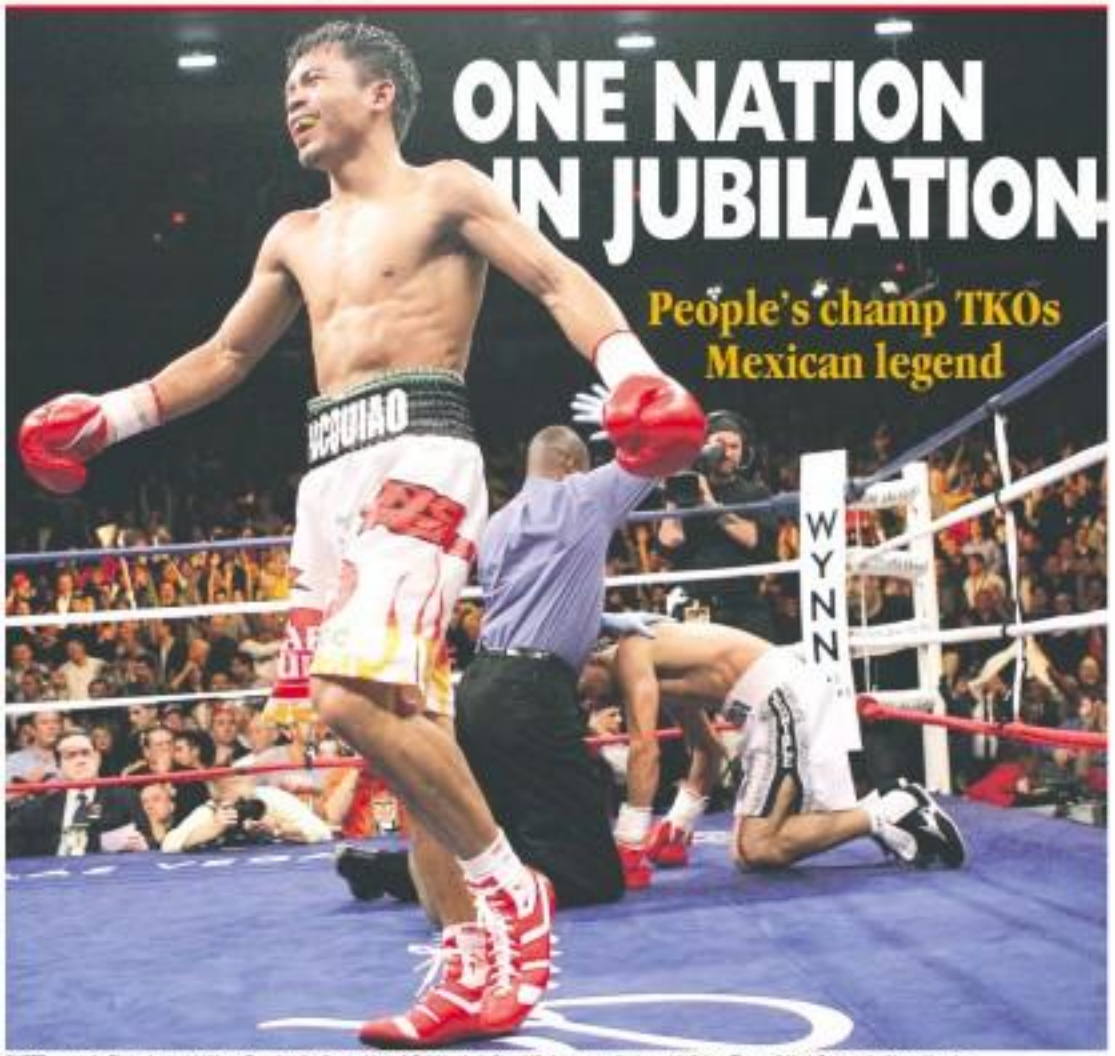
By Michael Lim Ubac and Luige A. del Puerto

BEFORE THE FIGHT IN Las Vegas, a text message about a supposed phone conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Manny Pacquiao circulated in Manila.

MELCOT A10

ONE NATION IN JUBILATION

People's champ TKOs Mexican legend



SWEET revenge for Filipino boxing idol Manny Pacquiao after flooring Mexico's Erik Morales in Round 10 of their super featherweight fight at Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas, Nevada.

AFP

'I hurt him every time I hit him'

By Christine O. Avendaño and PDI Bureaus

SOON AFTER SCORING AN ELECTRIFYING VICTORY in Las Vegas, ring sensation Manny Pacquiao expressed one wish for his country: "Sana magkaunawaan na po tayong lahat (I hope we'll all finally end our differences)."

And for three or four hours yesterday, Filipinos looked like they did.

In Metro Manila and elsewhere in the country, families stayed glued in front of their television sets, many motorists and pedestrians stayed off the streets, traders closed their shops and others set up TV monitors in markets to watch their idol hammer Erik Morales to submission.

In one hospital in Quezon City, doctors and nurses burst into cheers, although a patient was undergoing surgery in a nearby operating room. (See story on Page A20.)

Communist guerrillas and Moro separatist insurgents also listened to or watched the fight.

Even if only fleetingly, a people deeply divided over their President had united behind a former bakery worker.

Pacquiao expressed his wish for his

ONE NATION A6

JUDGES' SCORE
Paul Smith 87-84
Jerry Roth 87-84
Dave Morell 88-83

More stories on Page A20

FANS celebrate at Plaza Miranda after viewing the Pacquiao-Morales boxing fight on a giant screen.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Mexican rushed to hospital

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO, taunting his handlers for appearing very nervous, took a giant step out of his dressing room at the Thomas & Mack Center here to win his biggest fight and claim instant immortality via a crushing 10th round knockout of Mexican boxing great Erik Morales yesterday.

The conquest of Morales, adored by his own countrymen as a national treasure like Pacquiao, was so total and relentless that promoters were left wondering if

MEXICAN A6

WEATHER FORECAST

'Military headed to crisis with controversial appts'

Analyst says GMA shattered AFP morale

By TJ Burgonio, Luige A. del Puerto and Christine O. Avendaño

A MILITARY ANALYST YESTERDAY WARNED that an increasingly politicized military was "headed to a crisis" following the controversial appointments of the so-called "Hello Garci" generals to key posts.

"It's headed to a crisis. It's going to blow up. The only problem is when," said the analyst, who asked not to be named.

The military, he said, has increasingly lost its insulation from politics as discerning among other things, the recent appointments by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"If you don't insulate it from politics, the security of the state is weakened, and the professionals tend to rebel against the situation," said the analyst. "You're awakening their will to fight, disaffecting, even encouraging mutiny."

The analyst was referring to the recent appointments of Maj. Gen. Gabriel Dolorfino and Rear Admiral Tirso Danga as chiefs of the Southern and Western commands, respectively, who both figured in the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal.

By appointing the duo to "seemingly choice positions" in disregard of the recommendation of the board of generals, the President shattered the morale of the "rest of the AFP leadership," the analyst said.

Reference was mentioned to the rapes that supported electoral fraud may have been committed in Mindanao.

Danga headed the intelligence service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines when President Arroyo and former election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano were wiretapped supposedly talking about rigging the 2004 presidential election.

On Friday, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon admitted the appointments were causing discontent that could eventually lead to a repeat of the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Favoritism, revolving door

On top of this, perceived favoritism and the revolving door policy in the practice of appointing officers to key posts on a short-term basis, were fueling the AFP to that "critical point," the analyst said.

"If you remember, the Irish [Ballistic Missile Defense Organization] was formed after the AFP hierarchy threw away the merit system in the promotion of officials," he said, referring to the rightist group that mounted a series of failed coups against the Aquino administration in the late '80s.

The analyst, however, maintained he had not seen any sign that the underground rebel movement was plotting a coup.

But yesterday, the Young Officers Union now prosaically (YOUng), a shadowy group claiming to be composed of junior military officers, predicted the downfall of the Arroyo administration soon.

Country bleeding

"We cannot postpone this any longer because the country is bleeding profusely as a result of unbridled corruption and insatiable greed for power of Mrs. Arroyo and her crooked followers," said the YOUng statement signed by a Lt. Col. Antonio Montalan.

A ranking military officer yesterday confirmed objections to the appointments of certain officers to key positions which went against established rules.

The officer said the military had violated its own rules and that bodied ill for the organization.

"The policy is violated, and this will become a precedent, and it can happen again in the future. Mindsets in organizations [it will] ruin the organization," he said.

He pointed out that Dolorfino had less than a year left in the service, and therefore could no longer qualify for promotion under AFP rules, unless appointed as AFP chief of staff.

"A policy is like the law. If you break it, you should be punished," he said.

Junior officers have also expressed disappointment at the level of politicization in the Armed Forces.

A Marine captain said the issues headline story yesterday saying cracks were showing in the military was "a valid observation."

In its statement, the YOUng warned of bloodshed, saying they were ready to fight "fire with fire."

Defense threatened

And if fighting erupted, the YOUng said, it would make sure that presidential chief of staff Michael Defensor's blood was the first to be shed.

On Friday Defensor had warned that Makabayang would fight the rebel troops "fire with fire."

Defensor, however, dismissed the YOUng's threat as "probably part of psywar operations again by certain individuals."

At this developed, Makabayang yesterday denied rumors spread through text messages that AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga had resigned.

"These text messages are the handiwork of the old gang who have been trying a power grab but have utterly failed at every turn," Pres. Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in his weekly "View from the Palace" column.

Manila prelate raps rumormongers, Cha-cha backers

By Christine F. Esguerra

MANILA ARCHBISHOP GAUDENCIO Rosales yesterday criticized those spreading coup rumors and those relentlessly pushing the efforts to amend the Constitution to favor selfish political interests.

Rosales was concerned rumors would scare away foreign investors like the series of armed uprisings during the Aquino administration in the late 1980s.

"It's saddening even if it's just a rumor," Rosales said in Filipino in an interview over the Church-run Radio Veritas. "We, we have a problem, but is that (a coup) the solution?"

In the end, a coup, or simply rumors of it, would be costly for Filipinos, he said.

The prelate, who normally avoids commenting on political issues, urged the public to examine how coup rumors would affect the country's image with foreign investors.

"Foreign investors are losing trust in us and won't want to start a business here because of our attitude," he said.

Rumors of an impending military uprising against President Macapagal-Arroyo were resurrected following the escape of four junior military officers known as the Magdalo group of Antonio Trillanes from Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio on July 17.

Two weeks before that, Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, one of the Magdalo leaders of the failed July 2003 Oakwood uprising, fled after attending a court hearing in Makati City.

Rosales was also wary of the moves to amend the 1987 Constitution, ostensibly to pave the way for the shift from the presidential to a parliamentary system of government.

"If it would be good for the country, why not?" he said. "But what if it would only cater to the interests of other people? The Constitution exists! Its good if it is joined with charter changers."

He said he was particularly appalled by "family dynasties" that practically preside over the country's politics.

Before making any changes to the Constitution, he said there should first be "individual conversion" to come up with a better Charter.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, gave the same recipe to achieve national transformation.

Amid today's debates in the political arena, Rosales appealed to the nation's leaders and the public to turn their attention to the worsening poverty in the country.

"It's 'hain-nating," said the prelate, who said he had been visiting the poorest communities in his diocese.

His main weapon against poverty is the "Oratio ng Obispo," a program encouraging people to set aside at least 25 centavos daily for the poor. Contributions are placed in a general fund for feeding and livelihood projects.

JSU - AMOSUP

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Attend Council meet, pro-GMA solons beg antis

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

THE ADMINISTRATION camp yesterday virtually pleaded with the opposition to support the Council of State meeting called for Jan. 24 by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Administration Representative Rep. Edwin Up Gakon, Isabela), chair of the House committee on basic conversion and development, and Eduardo Ermita (MB, Cavite), a member of the Commission on Appointments, asked Senators President Franklin Drilon and other opposition leaders who had chosen to skip tomorrow's meeting to "reconsider" for the sake of the nation.

"The people will greatly appreciate it if we see our leaders unite for our nation's sake. The opposition and even all those not supportive of the government should participate in this process," Up said.

Senator Drilon, former President Gregorio Aquino and the minority leaders of Congress—Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Rep. Francis Escudero—declined the invitation issued by Malacañang through Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

So far, only former Presidents Fidel Ramos, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Majority Leader Rep. Prospero Nograles and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and the presidents of local government executives' associations had confirmed their attendance at the meeting.

Escudero said that if the object of the meeting was solely to address Mr. Arroyo's oft-the issues "affecting national interest, those issues had long been made known to her."

Up said recent developments like talk of a coup and its effect on the peso and stock market provided compelling reasons for the opposition to join in discussing the nation's fate.

He said the decision of opposition leaders to boycott the meeting was "tantamount to running their backs on the nation's welfare in favor of their own agenda to seize power."

Ermita, for his part, deplored the opposition leaders' decision to boycott the meeting as this "showed their unwillingness to set aside their political interests."

"If they believe the discussions are going nowhere during the meeting, then they could leave. But to reject outright the President's invitation with their usual excuses is not good for the nation," he said.

Malacañang, however, does not seem to keep the opposition in the dark about what would transpire at the meeting.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday the Palace would make sure those who would not be at the meeting would receive copies of its highlights.

Bunye reiterated that the Palace respected the decision of those who had opted not to attend.

"Be that as it may, the meeting will push through for the national interest and topics of the highlights will be sent to those who cannot come," he said in his "News from the Palace" newspaper column.

The Jan. 24 meeting was called by the Palace upon the suggestion of former President Fidel Ramos.

It intends to take up the current initiatives on Charter change, the government's economic programs and the implementation of electoral reforms.

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio said it was possible the council would take up the recent attempts at destabilizing the administration.

Claudio said five senators had confirmed their attendance at the meeting but he did not identify them.

In RP, cost of doing business includes paying tax to rebels

PEÑAROYA—RUL fire and blisters-cocktails raised alarm on a telecom signal tower in this northern Philippine town recently as the "warnos" paid Globe Telecom a midnight visit to force the big mobile phone firm to play its part in bankrolling the communist revolution.

Neighbors roused by the gunfire called for help as the cabin of the tower burned. In this farming town, just 40 km south of Manila, the by the time soldiers arrived, the unwelcome visitors had melted into the dark, leaving behind a shaken, disarmed security guard who has not shown up for work since.

The attack was not unusual as gunmen spouting Mao era slogans and using arson methods more closely associated with organized crime and impose a hefty cut on doing business in the Philippines, official data and experts say.

Compromise

"In terms of revolutionary tax, [business-men] compromise," said Abraham Purugganan, a former underscretary for special concerns in the office of President Macapagal-Arroyo and who now provides ammunition and risk management advice to government agencies and private companies.

Seven or eight in 10 companies that receive extortion demand letters look over the euphemistically termed "revolutionary tax on the enemy claims" because "there are a lot of things that they can do against you," Purugganan told AFP.

Strikes by communist-led unions that dominate industries can shut down harbors, equipment and vehicles can be damaged, and company executives can be ambushed, he said.

Construction, mining and logging, factories, ranches and state-owned fisheries, bus lines, cruisers and port operators, sugar and coconut mills, and poultry and livestock farmers across the country are all "taxed."

The resulting cash is laundered through "bank to bank" payments, leading politicians, foundations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Payment in kind

The extortionary tax can also be paid in kind, including "high-powered firearms, explosives, medicine, communication equipment like satellite phones, computers, vehicles, or safe houses," said Purugganan.

Communist Solidarity, leader of a New People's Army (NPA) guerrilla force south of Manila, denies the rebel tax is extortionary.

"Unlike the Mafia that is theoretical," Solidarity told AFP in an interview, "when big companies enter a consolidated area, they usually talk to us before they set up a business there."

Globe Telecom says about two dozen of its 5,000-odd towers across the country have been shot up or firebombed in the past year either it stood up to the rebels' demands.

Such sabotage has driven up the insurance premiums on the towers, said one of the 57 million, Globe spokesperson Anne Campos told AFP.

"We will never pay any tax that is not legitimate," he said.

P4B a year

One government study shows to AFP estimated the rebels raise about P4 billion every year for the 37-year-old insurgency, including P1.3 billion collected from companies.

The rest is protection money from politicians, funds skimmed off government or foreign-funded development projects, and proceeds from organized crime.

The funds raised are invested in extensive businesses through dummy corporations in shipping and other industries, while the rebels even get to play "in the world's top stock markets," one government source said, citing captured documents. AFP

I hurt him every time I hit him, says Pacquiao

From page A1

the boxing of his career. It was the third loss in the last four fights for the Mexican who had held titles in three different weight classes and had been in some brutal fights.

"I was tired because of making weight and I was tired because of all the tough fights I've had," Morales said.

Morales (48-4) had beaten Pacquiao in a 12-round decision in March last year, a loss Pacquiao attributed to problems with his contract, the referee and his gloves. He went home the ring favorite (Tuesday in Manila), saying he was 100-percent fit and that there wouldn't be excuses, win or lose.

The first fight was a 12-round brawl, and the rematch promised to live up to expectations early with both fighters trading punches freely and landing their share of hits. In front, Pacquiao was busier though and seemed to win some early rounds through the sheer volume of his punches.

No cuts were at stake, but a lot of national pride was in the hunt (less than 24,414 fans in the 39,000 capacity arena, many cheering their countrymen on).

As the fight went on, it was Pacquiao's supporters doing the most cheering as their idol wore down Morales and landed shot after shot on the head and body.

"I could see he was feeling problems taking my punches," Pacquiao said. "I had no problem riding his."

Big punch in Round 2

Pacquiao (43-3-1, 32 knockouts) landed a big punch in the second round, a left hand that sent Morales' buttocked and forced him to grimace. But rope to stay up. Morales also appeared ready to go down at the end of the sixth round after a series of punches in the corner, but bounced off unless Kenny Bayless and stayed upright at the bell sounded to end the round.

Morales outboxed Pacquiao in Rounds 3, 4 and 5. However, that effort seemed to cap the

PACQUIAO delivers a hard blow to the face of Morales in Round 9 of their grudge fight. AFP

energy of the 28-year-old Mexican as he offered less resistance to Pacquiao's pressure as the fight progressed and Morales looked increasingly weary. Between rounds, he complained that his legs hurt and his conscience inflicted them.

Morales' corner tried to get their fighter to keep the pressure on, saying Pacquiao didn't know how to fight backward. But Pacquiao didn't have to because he stayed in front of Morales, bouncing back and forth and throwing punches at every angle.

"The ring seemed to shrink in the ninth round," said Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach. "I could see Morales was fading from all the body punches and Manny's right hook was beautiful."

'He's all gone'

Morales was known all his career as a big puncher who never backed up. But for the last 20 seconds of the ninth round he ran from Pacquiao, trying not to take any more punishment.

"He's all gone," Roach said. Pacquiao after the ninth round.

Roach was prescient as Pacquiao came out and hurt the previously unbeaten Morales, whose face was marked with the sheer number of punches he took. Midway through the round, Pacquiao landed a huge left hand in the middle of a combination that put Morales on the canvas.

Morales stayed there with his arm over a ring rope before finally getting up as the count of nine. Pacquiao got $1 million for the fight, but more importantly kept his status as a national hero in the Philippines.

With the victory Pacquiao was installed as the World Boxing Council's No. 1 contender in the division in which Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrera holds the title. AE AFP

From page A1

the rematch closer in the fight contract was worth honoring.

In the 6th, 39-year-old Morales (described in 51 previous fights, got a terrible beating. The consequence, complete brain was a picture of total surrender when he was waved out by referee Kenny Bayless with 27 seconds left in the 11th round.

Morales was a pitiful—eyebrows busted, nose bleeding, lips out. The handsome Mexican fighter appeared like a school kid who had been mauled by a gang of thugs at the end of the contest.

The mauling demolition, washed before a big, restive audience that included world champions like Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Winky Wright, produced contrasting results in the 10,000-seat arena.

While Mexicans stood blankly, some of them with tears in their eyes, Filipinos jumped, embraced one another and danced, some shrieking in supreme delight.

It was a scene out of Libertarians, as Pacquiao's scant lifting triumph lifted the sagging national spirit.

Pacquiao, in a white and red outfit, a white bandanna across his forehead, crossed himself, knelt and prayed in his corner upon entering the ring.

He was ahead or nothing at the first bell when he clipped Morales with stiff jabs and combinations.

He escalated his hot start through the second round but Morales recomposed himself and took charge in the next round until the fifth.

A mismatch

While that first encounter was a close one, bloody and dramatic, Pacquiao proceeded to turn the second fight into a mismatch starting in the second half by outgunning and overpowering Morales, who had so far rushed on a hospital pass.

All three judges had Pacquiao ahead at the moment of stopping, a tribute to the Filipino boxing superstar's newfound skills and sharpness.

Paul Smith and Jerry Roth had it 97-94, Dave Moretti 96-95, all for Pacquiao.

The bout was stopped at 1:47 of the 11th round.

The fight was for the lowly WBC International super featherweight title, reserved for fighters ranked 11th and lower but the reward for Pacquiao last night was boundless.

Feat a first

The awesome feat was the first of its magnitude and import for any Filipino athlete.

"I'll be OK," Pacquiao assured his handlers who were visibly shaking in their shoes when the scoreboard lighter was called into the ring.

His job done, Pacquiao returned to his dressing room to see his now ecstatic team members.

"I told you I'd do it, di ba?" Pacquiao, repeating only a spirit over the left eye, quipped.

Pacquiao, a poor boy from Mindanao, had his taste of boxing as one while working in the construction company of Robling Carino, his first manager.

Urania was at ringside here promoting a spot pageant of Pacquiao.

Pacquiao, a former WBC flyweight champion, now his second world crown, the IBF super featherweight title, when he stopped Lehlohonolo Ledwaba of Africa in a last minute submission in 2001.

He never gave up

His stock, however, rose precipitously following his 13th-round demolition of Illinois upstate Barrera, a Mexican boxing legend like Morales, in Texas in 2003.

Barrera is the reigning WBC super featherweight champion and the possibility of him meeting with Pacquiao was even reported following the humiliating knockout by Morales.

Pacquiao, a heavy favorite, won out, blooded and outpointed by Morales in their first fight last March.

He, however, refused to give up.

He labored for a rematch.

Working with the whole boxing world considering Pacquiao's boundless perseverance was rewarded with his instant elevation as one of the greatest Filipino boxers in boxing down.

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Mexican rushed to hospital

Corrections

IN YESTERDAY'S ISSUE, the front-page banner story entitled "The Philippine Military Academy" (the first adopted President Sinagpagi Arroyo as its honorary member; Mr Arroyo, who was the Vice President then, was adopted an honorary member by 1986 Class 1978...see STO).

Readers may contact their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Ombudsman, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 185 Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City, fax this: 892-67-62/76; e-mail address: dgfelix@inquirer.com.ph.

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US: We want to see justice in rape case

By Nob Cantoveros

TO AVOID A SMOLDERING FOLLOWING: It's refused to hand over four American Marines accused of rape, the US Embassy in Manila yesterday sought to assuage the Philippine government that the United States also wanted to see justice done in the case and the guilty punished.

"We recognize that a case like this stirs strong emotional and political reactions," the US Embassy said. "We believe that the judicial process should take its course in order for justice to be served."

The US Embassy stressed that Washington had the "deepest respect for the sovereignty of the ally," as shown by its cooperation with local authorities since the start of the rape investigation.

"Regarding the current incident, the US and the Philippines share the same goal—we want to see justice done. Rape is a terrible crime, and its perpetrators should be punished whenever and wherever they are found guilty in a fair and impartial trial," the embassy statement said.

But the embassy also issued a reminder on the "one principle" of Philippine and US laws that an accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

The Visiting Forces Agreement, it said, clarifies the legal status of visiting American troops and provides the framework for cases to "move forward" if they are charged under Philippine laws.

Some legislators, however, want the VFA, a seven-year-old accord between the US and the Philippines, to be put on hold and renegotiated following the embassy's refusal to yield the US Marines.

To appease the lawmakers, the US Embassy said both the military and humanitarian benefits of the VFA.

Since the VFA's signing in 1998, both countries have conducted dozens of joint military exercises, training tens of thousands of US and Philippine soldiers and bringing "significant humanitarian assistance and community service to the Philippines," it said in the Jan. 22 statement.

During a recent joint exercise dubbed "Balikatan (Balikatan)," it said, around 5,000 American and Filipino troops not only trained together to improve operational compatibility and readiness but also "renovated schools and classrooms in Subic, donated computers and school supplies, and provided free medical and dental services to more than 2,000 Philippine citizens."

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ROQUIAD flashes the victory sign after knocking down Phonaloxin in Round 10 of their 12-round bout.

One nation ...

From page A1

country on national and cable television when interviewed in his dressing room after the fight.

The home runs were commended by Filipino officials, led by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Pacquiao profusely thanked the nation for supporting him with its prayers. He admitted he felt like crying over the huge support his compatriots gave him.

"I hope you would continue to support me and, especially to President Macapagal-Arroyo, thank you, thank you very much and to you all, thank you very much," Pacquiao said. "God bless you all."

Pacquiao also spoke by phone to his trainer, who watched the bout from Malacañang.

"I join Filipinos from every corner of the Philippines and the world in congratulating Manny Pacquiao on his very convincing victory," Mr. Arroyo said in a statement.

An inspiration

She said Pacquiao's win should serve "as an inspiration and constant reminder to all our countrymen that the Filipinos can for the best in any endeavor when he puts his heart into it."

While the fight was going in Las Vegas on Saturday night (Sunday morning in the Philippines), there were only a few shoppers in the big malls in Metro Manila, despite it being a Sunday.

Many of the usual mall customers apparently stayed home or had gone elsewhere to watch the bout.

Shoppers began to come in at about 3 p.m., when the fight was over.

Cheering every punch

Only light traffic flowed along stretches of Ortigas.

In Mangaldan, many jeepney and tricycle drivers in San Jose, usually dropped plying their routes and watched the fight on television at their terminals.

Every Pacquiao punch that found Morales' chin or stomach set up roars and cheering.

"The victory of Manny is a source of happiness to all of us Filipinos, especially during these times," said Governor Amado Espino Jr.

In Baguio City, traffic was at its lightest in years because most residents stayed home to watch the fight, according to the police.

Hundreds of people converged on Malcolm Square-Perfecto to watch a delayed telecast of the match on a widescreen set up by the ABS-CBN network.

Protest for roosters

In Barangay Dominican, families used the match as an excuse to hold reunions. Jeepney and taxi drivers also took a breather to watch the match before doing their rounds.

But not everyone celebrates. Tang, among huge cockfighting.

"I decided to rush a feeling because the radio already broadcast the fight, and I already knew who won," Tanggonan said.

While in Las Vegas watching the fight, Gov. Vilma Santos-Recto ("Claro") Singson acted as the "blow-by-blow commentator" of a radio station in Ilocos.

Singson interrupted a religious program of the 82 Commando Radio to deliver his fight commentary.

In Sorsogon City, hundreds of passengers going to different towns were stranded for hours after jeepney drivers grounded their vehicles to watch the bout.

Deserted streets

The streets were deserted, a scene experienced only during Good Friday. Tricycle drivers also stopped plying their routes.

Restaurants with TV sets were packed with jubilant customers.

Bet Grace Pascual, administrative officer of ID-Addil, refused to watch the fight, saying she wouldn't be able to bear it if Pacquiao lost.

From their hideouts (minus whose words of Lacson, the Commander Perry of the Philippines and the Sea Dragon) joined the nation in celebrating the victory of Pacquiao and that of another Filipino, Brown Jaen, to an undefeated.

Victory for the people

"We salute them for their victory. Their win is also the victory of the people," communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said in a text message. He said he followed the fight on radio.

When asked if the rebels are unanimously stopped their operations against government forces so they could monitor the bout, Rosal said: "The NPA operations against the enemies continued even while some of the Red fighters were monitoring the fight."

In Cotabato City, the Moro Islamic liberation Front congratulated Pacquiao on his feat.

"We expected that he would win the bout. We join the Filipino people not only in the country but in other countries as well in celebrating his victory," MILF spokesperson Eid Rababa said on the phone.

"We support him. We are happy that even in sports, can gang-fight, the spirit of unity," Rababa added.

He said the bout preceded in forces in the field with TV sets so they could watch the fight.

Politicians were also exultant.

Sen. Richard Gordon said the fight was spectacular and noted that Pacquiao was "focused" throughout.

"That's one thing we Filipinos lack. He also showed the Pinoy is world-class," Gordon said.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said of Pacquiao: "He's a national treasure. Let's take care of him and he's an puch him to enhance himself."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan called Pacquiao "truly the Filipino people's champion." With reports from Lizon Dedi, Leonicio Bobis Jr., Frank Cimatu and Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Bobby Lobelan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Michael Lim Ubac, Jaime del Prado and Ed Zurbano in Manila, and PDI Mindanao Bureau, AFP

Tutors score GSIS, want insurance fund of their own

By Alexis Papa

EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (Deped) want out of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) because of the alleged inefficiency of the state-run pension fund.

Instead, they are proposing the creation of a separate insurance system to cater exclusively to both teaching and nonteaching personnel of the Deped.

Deped National Employees Union president Domingo Alidon said the creation of their own insurance system will finally solve teachers' complaints against the GSIS.

He said the GSIS had been remiss in its handling of teachers' records.

"Until now, our records at GSIS are incorrect and incomplete. Our dividends are not accurately computed," Alidon said. He said most of the complaints they received were from employees who were supposed to receive P5,000 in dividends annually but received only P1.25.

The Deped is the largest government employee in the country with over half a million workers, the majority of whom are public school teachers.

Alidon said the union would present to Congress a draft bill that would provide for the creation of a separate insurance body for the Deped similar to the insurance system for soldiers.

He said that Deped employees could not avail of loans from the GSIS because Union Bank, which has a contract with the GSIS as servicer to electronic card (E-Card), had stopped processing loans because of the incorrect, inaccurate and sometimes non-existent records of Deped employees with the GSIS.

The Deped union had earlier presented the allocation of P37.2 million to the GSIS for the updating of Deped records. The union said the amount was "unfair and unreasonable, if not illegal."

"It is very disheartening for the entire union to suffer the consequences for the inconsistence and inefficiency of the GSIS management," Alidon said.

Instead of spending the amount to correct the GSIS' mistakes, "the money could have been used to give dividends in favor of the members."

Alidon also asked the GSIS to pass and approve payments already made by Deped employees, saying they had been relegated in paying their loans and premiums to the GSIS.

Probe set of huge Semirara oil spill

THE SPECIAL BOARD OF MARINE INQUIRY will start its investigation into the massive oil spill that contaminated some 40 sq km of the waters off Semirara island in Antique last month and destroyed mangroves and corals in the area.

SBMI Hydrographic board member Lt. Rosario A. Belino said the board has summoned the National Power Corp., whose barge spilled some 1,900,000 liters of oil off Semirara on Dec. 18.

"It's a challenatory hearing, more on fact finding to determine if it was an accident or if it happened due a liability," Belino said.

The hearing will be held on Jan. 31 in Iloilo, the district of the Philippine Coast Guard which has jurisdiction over the contaminated waters. The original hearing was scheduled for Jan. 18 but Napocor sought an extension because its lawyers could not appear earlier.

The PCG estimated that the massive oil spill damaged 236 hectares of mangroves bordering the island, of which 60 ha were old growth. The PCG also noted dead seagrass and corals in the area.

"The administrative penalties would depend on the volume of the oil spilled," Belino said.

The SBMI is composed of four members – a lawyer, chief engineer, master mariner and a line officer of the PCG, which in this case is Commander Ignacio Dilalio, deputy fire commander of the district.

Napocor has hired about 50 casual workers to clean up the oil spill, according to the PCG, which estimated the total cost of the cleanup would reach P80 million and take four months to finish. Blanche C. Rivera

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Israel hints it is preparing military action against Iran

JERUSALEM—DEFENSE MINISTER SHAUL MOFAZ ON SATURDAY hinted that Israel is preparing for military action to stop Iran's nuclear program, but said international diplomacy must be the first course of action.

"We are giving priority at this stage to diplomatic action ... but in my case we cannot take a nuclear option for Iran and we must prepare ourselves," Mofaz said at a prestigious academic conference in the coastal town of Herzliya, north of Tel Aviv.

"We must develop the option of our defense with all that implies," Mofaz said without providing further details.

"We must treat the (Iranian) threat responsibly and with utmost seriousness," Mofaz said, answering accusations that Tehran was supporting "terrorism" by funding militant groups.

"Iran gives Hezbollah $50 million (41 million euros) per year, and part of this money goes to Palestinian terrorist groups," he said.

"In addition, Iran is the primary source of money for Islamic Jihad which committed the majority of suicide attacks against Israel last year."

Mofaz's comments were likely to add to the growing tensions with Iran.

Israel has come to view the Islamic republic in Tehran as its number one enemy and its fears were heightened when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in October called for the Jewish state to be "wiped off the map." It accuses the Tehran government of pursuing nuclear weapons.

Iran fears the threat of being referred to the UN Security Council for resuming sensitive uranium fuel research work that Israel and the Western powers fear would give the regime the knowhow to build a bomb.

Tehran insists such work is legal given it has signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has branded atomic weapons "un-Islamic."

Mofaz welcomed the US-led effort to bring Iran before the Security Council, saying sanctions and international oversight of Iran's nuclear program is the "correct policy at this time." But he supported that Israel is preparing for military action if the diplomatic efforts fail.

"Israel will not be able to accept a situation in which the possibility and a threat from the capabilities to destroy Israel, with all that that implies, and this we are preparing," Mofaz said.

The defense minister's remarks came after interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Tuesday that Israel would not let anyone who threatened its existence obtain weapons of mass destruction.

"Israel cannot allow in any way or in any stage someone who has such hostile intentions against us to obtain weapons that could threaten our existence," Olmert said in talks with President Moshe Katsav.

Israeli leaders have repeatedly said they hope the crisis can be resolved through diplomacy, and that any military action would have to be part of an international effort. Israeli officials have denied having plans for a unilateral preventive strike.

The Jewish state has never acknowledged the existence of a nuclear arsenal, though it is widely believed to possess hundreds of atomic weapons.

Mofaz accused Iran of helping masterminds a suicide bombing that wounded 20 people in Tel Aviv last week. Iran said on Saturday that the allegations were baseless.

During a trip to Paris last week, Ahmadinejad met with leaders of Islamic Jihad, the group that carried out the bombing, and challenged Europe to take back the Jews who emigrated to Israel. It was the latest in a string of controversy spanning Israel's existence. *AFP*

Kosovo's President Rugova dies; delicate talks delayed

PRISTINA, SERBIA-MONTENEGRO—KOSOVO President Ibrahim Rugova died of cancer at the age of 61 on Saturday, his office said, forcing the United Nations to delay delicate talks on the contested province's future status.

Rugova's death at his home in the provincial capital Pristina came just four days before the first face-to-face talks on Kosovo between Albanian leaders and the Serbia government were to be held in Vienna.

In the talks, the negotiating team representing Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, which Rugova was due to lead, is demanding nothing short of independence from Serbia, which the government in Belgrade firmly opposes.

"Rugova died in his residence, where he has been treated for his illness, surrounded by his family, personal doctors and UN doctors," said a presidential office statement, adding he had chosen "enormous courage and high morale" in his battle with the disease.

"The president's death is a great loss for the Kosovo people in a decisive moment for our future," said Kosovo's government. "The government calls upon the citizens to remain peaceful and continue working toward building a better future for all."

The government later said it had proposed five days of mourning. Rugova's funeral would be held Wednesday, pending agreement by his family and presidency.

The chief UN special envoy for the talks, former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, said in Helsinki that the talks would be postponed until early February.

It was not clear who would replace Rugova as the head of the Albanian talks team, but his positions as president was temporarily filled by Kosovo Parliament Speaker Nexhat Daci.

Ahtisaari joined other world leaders by urging Kosovo to keep their calm.

Tibetan tensions remain despite the end of the conflict between Serbian forces and separatist Albanian rebels more than six and a half years ago.

The remain that President Rugova would have liked to see that we will proceed with our talks as planned," Ahtisaari said in Helsinki," said Ahtisaari, adding he hoped "the situation will remain calm."

Serbian President Boris Tadic said the death of Rugova would be a "great loss" for Kosovo Albanians. He said he hoped his absence would not derail efforts to find a peaceful compromise acceptable to all parties.

Rugova, who symbolized the peaceful resistance to the repression of the regime of former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic, was a chain-smoker who revealed in September that he was suffering from lung cancer.

RUGOVA is seen in photo taken Dec. 11, 2005, the last time he was seen in public.

Despite appearing in public on Dec. 20, Rugova had canceled another breakfast audience because the stress talks team had not been able to meet for 40 days.

Kosovo has been run by the United Nations and Nato since June 1999, when alliance airstrikes led Serbian forces under Milosevic to withdraw from the province, where they had been committing atrocities on separatists.

Rugova was born in Kosovo on Dec. 2, 1944, and went on to Paris' Sorbonne University before becoming a prominent author and leading intellectual in ex-Yugoslavia.

He first appeared on the diplomatic scene in 1989 and founded his Democratic League of Kosovo party the next year in response to Milosevic's decision to revoke Kosovo's autonomy.

Seen by many as the "father of the nation," Rugova maintained close ties with the West, particularly Washington. Although he never sought the limelight, he was awarded the Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought in 1998.

He was criticized for his description of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) guerrillas as a group "possibly formed by Belgrade, which aimed to discredit peaceful Kosovo-Albanian politics."

A political feud ensued between the party and the UCK, which quickly won the support of the militant Albanian population.

Rugova was also on many targets for hardliners who charged he collaborated with Milosevic on April 1, 1999, by meeting with him in Belgrade, a few days after the start of the 78-day NATO bombing campaign and appearing on Serbian television to call for a "political solution."

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No. 07-001-2006

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EFFECTIVE January 1, 2006, a new Philhealth premium contribution schedule for the employed sector will be implemented per Philhealth Circular No. 01 -a-2005. Below is the contribution schedule for reference:

Monthly Salary Bracket	Monthly Salary Range	Salary Base (SB)	Total Monthly Contribution	Employee Share (EsS) (EsS = 0.5 x TMC)	Employer Share (ErS) (EsS = 0.5 x TMC)
1	P5,999.99 and below	P5,000.00	P150.00	P75.00	P75.00
2	6,000.00 to 6,999.99	6,000.00	180.00	90.00	90.00
3	7,000.00 to 7,999.99	7,000.00	210.00	105.00	105.00
4	8,000.00 to 8,999.99	8,000.00	240.00	120.00	120.00
5	9,000.00 to 9,999.99	9,000.00	270.00	135.00	135.00
6	10,000.00 to 10,999.99	10,000.00	300.00	150.00	150.00
7	11,000.00 to 11,999.99	11,000.00	330.00	165.00	165.00
8	12,000.00 to 12,999.99	12,000.00	360.00	180.00	180.00
9	13,000.00 to 13,999.99	13,000.00	390.00	195.00	195.00
10	14,000.00 to 14,999.99	14,000.00	420.00	210.00	210.00
11	15,000.00 to 15,999.99	15,000.00	450.00	225.00	225.00
12	16,000.00 to 16,999.99	16,000.00	480.00	240.00	240.00
13	17,000.00 to 17,999.99	17,000.00	510.00	255.00	255.00
14	18,000.00 to 18,999.99	18,000.00	540.00	270.00	270.00
15	19,000.00 to 19,999.99	19,000.00	570.00	285.00	285.00
16	20,000.00 to 20,999.99	20,000.00	600.00	300.00	300.00
17	21,000.00 to 21,999.99	21,000.00	630.00	315.00	315.00
18	22,000.00 to 22,999.99	22,000.00	660.00	330.00	330.00
19	23,000.00 to 23,999.99	23,000.00	690.00	345.00	345.00
20	24,000.00 to 24,999.99	24,000.00	720.00	360.00	360.00
21	25,000.00 and up	25,000.00	750.00	375.00	375.00

Contributions from the public and private sector employers should be remitted on or before the 10th calendar day of the month following the applicable month or any Philhealth Offices or through accredited collecting agents and their branches nationwide. Employers are also enjoined to submit the Quarterly Remittance Reports (RF-1) on or before the 15th day of the month following the applicable quarter.

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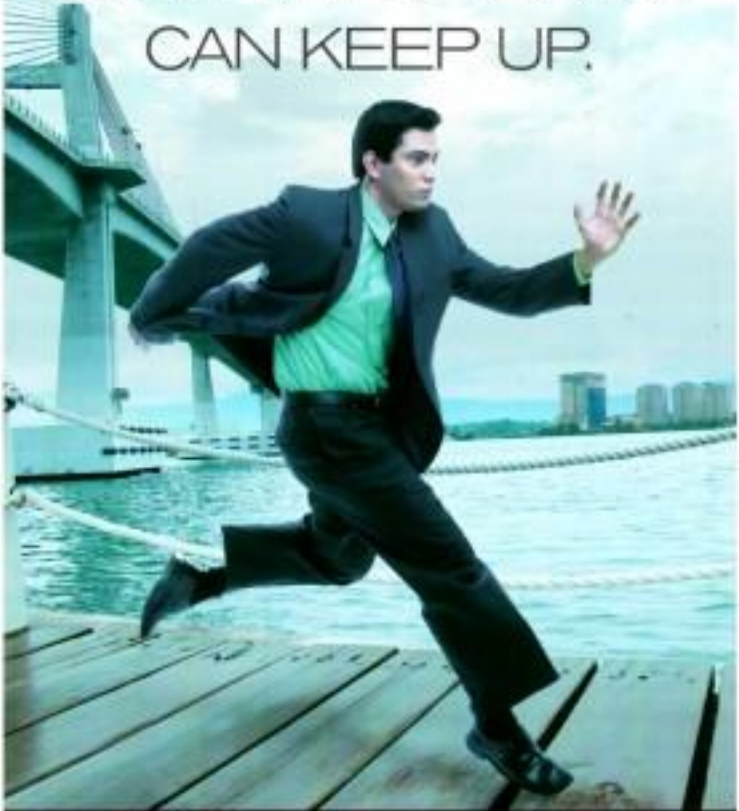

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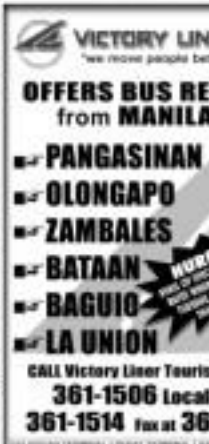

US made the whipping boy in tense Canadian election

MONTREAL — PRIME MINISTER PAUL MARTIN once made meeting Canada's bruised relations with Washington a priority — but has used America as a whipping boy in his desperate bid to retrieve power.

Feeling defeat in Monday's general election, Martin has stressed his main rival, Conservative leader Stephen Harper, of hatching a secret hardline agenda more in tune with US arch conservatives than mainstream Canadians.

Scorning Canada's southern neighbor and biggest trading partner – not to mention the world's sole superpower – may seem questionable diplomacy.

But in a country with a social safety net more in line with liberal Europe than conservative America, and where suspicion of Bush runs high, it can be good politics.

Martin's Liberal Party warned in an attack ad that a Harper win would "bring a smile to George W. Bush's face."

And the prime minister himself has not been shy of slinging his own mud, damning Harper's agenda as "totally drawn from the extreme right in the United States."

And he has even sparred with the US ambassador to Canada, after ticking off Washington for its refusal to join a multi-billion plan to cut greenhouse gases which emerged from a UN climate conference here in December.

Harper shares US criticisms of the Kyoto accord as climate change, which Canada has ratified, though falters short on implementing.

He signaled he would review Martin's decision last year to join the US missile defense shield.

Harper has also pledged to boost the military, a move that would also be popular in Washington, where officials are disdainful of Canada's ability to secure the neighbors' vast unused borders. AFP

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A Tradition of Leadership

Pakistan says US strike at al-Qaida leaders was 'counterproductive'

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN — OFFICIALS from Islamic alliance said Sunday it will step up protests against a US missile strike that targeted al-Qaida's leaders but killed 13 civilians, and the president said the US-Qaeda ties is serious.

The opposition has already launched demonstrations against the Jan. 13 attack, with thousands burning effigies of US President George W. Bush — and many vowing to fight to Allied, or help wage against the United States.

The strike apparently targeted — but missed — al-Qaida's No. 2 leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in Damadola town near the Afghan border in Pakistan's mountainous Bajur region. Pakistani officials believe it wiped out four other top al-Qaida operatives, but also killed at least 13 civilians including women and children.

Pakistan does not allow US forces in Afghanistan to pursue militants across the border, or to launch strikes without permission. Washington has refused to publicly discuss the attack on Damadola, with officials mostly urging the United States will continue pursuing terrorists no matter where they were.

In comments aired Sunday on Pakistan's independent GEO television channel, visiting US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns would only say Washington has full "respect" for Pakistan's government.

"The government of Pakistan has said, 'On head in commenting on this situation, and it is proper because this is your country," said Burns, who is on a visit of South Asia. "It's a sovereign entity, so to speak that ... I think we've handled this situation in an appropriate way."

The assault has caused friction between Islamabad and Washington — and widespread outrage in the Islamic nation of 150 million.

The latest protest was on the least Sunday in Bajur Qala town near Damadola.

On Monday, a man-month-old was dated to move from Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, to the radicalized of Peshawar and then on to Damadola, said Shahid Shirazi, a spokesperson for the opposition alliance called the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, or United Action Forum.

On Saturday, Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf told the United States it cannot repeat such attacks, while Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri called the assault "counterproductive" given the "prevailing public sentiment."

Musharraf told Burns that "what happened in Bajur must not be repeated," a foreign ministry official said on condition of anonymity due to policy.

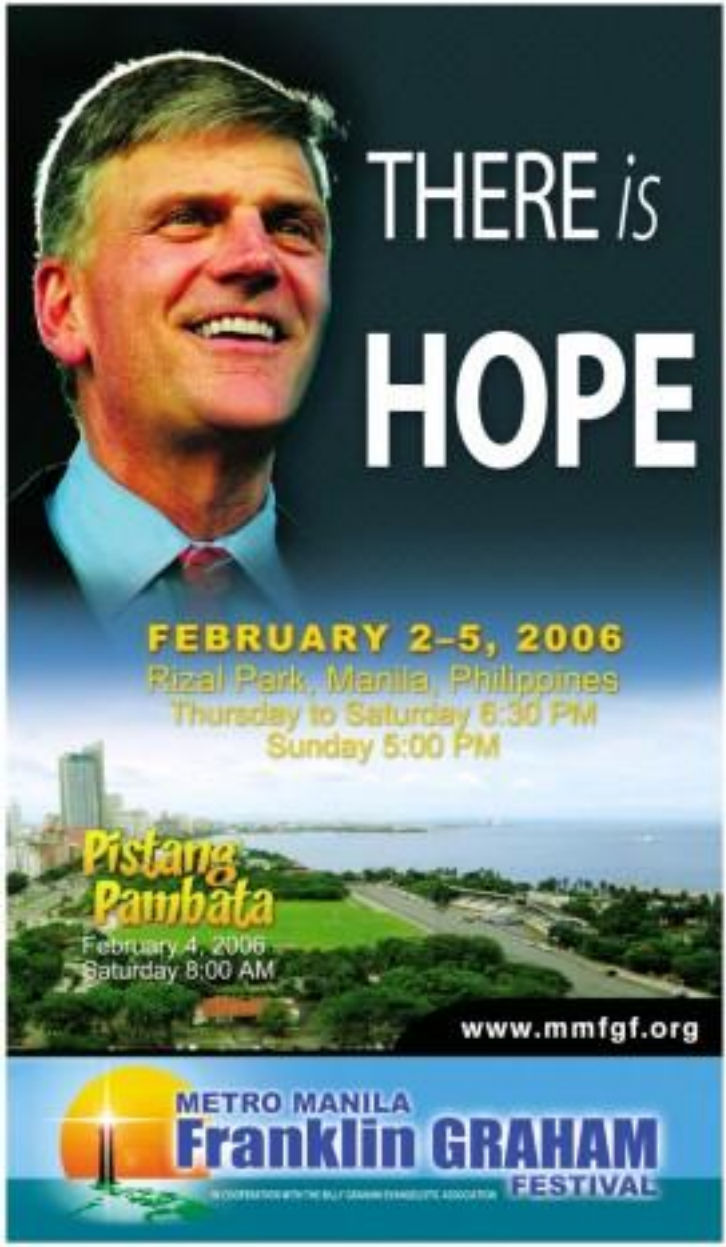
"While reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to counter-terror, the foreign minister underlined the need for the two countries to work in a manner that precludes recriminations like these," a foreign ministry statement said late last night.

GEO television anchor also said Musharraf told Burns that Pakistan is "fully capable of defending its frontiers," and that repeated attacks could affect cooperation in the war on terror, to which Islamabad is a top US ally.

Shirazi said Musharraf's first publicly-voiced comments on issue were simply "too late."

AP

RESCUERS begin their attempts to help a northern s
Thames in the heart of London, Jan. 21. They are in



Kuwait in crisis as to oust new emir f

KUWAIT CITY — KUWAIT plunged into crisis Saturday as the Cabinet decided to start unprecedented procedures to remove the country's ailing new emir, who remain stationed on taking the oath of office.

The Cabinet decision was announced following a lengthy emergency meeting chaired by powerful Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who has been assisted by a majority of members of the ruling family to replace the emir.

The move apparently came after late-minute goodwill moves failed to persuade the emir to abdicate, as Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah asked parliament Saturday to convene a special session so that he would be sworn in.

A government statement said "the Council of Ministers ... decided to initiate constitutional procedures stipulated in Article 3 of the 1964 Succession Inheritance Law," which stipulates the removal of the emir on health g

A senior govern AFP earlier Satur not find a delayed decision to allow pursuade the ail

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Ahmad's cold had decided to c oked session ove situation, but tha to holding a spe government sour

Sheikh Saad, who was 30 to read a earth, the seat va days following th Jaber al-Ahmad Sabah, brother of Sheik

Japan gov't hit over US beef flap

TOKYO — OPPOSITION LEADERS IN JAPAN took the government to task Sunday for lifting a ban on US beef imports last month, only to be forced to reimpose it over a shipment containing banned anatomical materials.

"The government's political responsibility is extremely grave," Yoshihiko Noda, chief of parliamentary affairs for the main opposition Democratic Party, said on a panel discussion carried by public broadcaster NHK.

"The government dared to take the decision [on the resumption of US beef imports] without guaranteeing the effectiveness of the inspection system," he said.

Tokyo had agreed to resume US beef imports last month provided they came from US cattle no more than 20 months old and without certain parts, such as brains and spinal material, deemed risky.

But a US beef shipment flown into Tokyo's Narita airport on Friday was found to include spinal columns, prompting Japan to reimpose the four-year ban of mad cow disease.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe on Saturday pledged to lodge a formal protest with the US administration when Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick holds talks with top officials in Japan this week.

Abe, a close ally of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, said Foreign Minister Taro Aso also scheduled to meet Zoellick here on Monday.

Noda said a fact-finding team from Japan had determined that US facilities to inspect beef for export were poorly organized. AFP

China draws $96B from tourism in '05

BEIJING — CHINA'S TOURISM SECTOR earned $96 billion last year and will likely grow by 8 percent this year as the country climbs up the ladder of top travel destinations, state media said Sunday.

China received 120 million overseas visitors in 2005 and sent 31 million outbound travellers, the Xinhua news agency reported. Travellers from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan are considered overseas visitors.

Income from domestic tourism reached 520.6 billion yuan ($96 billion) while earnings from international travellers totaled $36 billion, Xinhua cited the National Tourism Administration as saying.

China's tourism industry has been developing rapidly in recent years, with inbound, outbound and domestic markets growing exponentially.

Zhao Qiwu, director of the administration, predicted China would see 130 million inbound travellers this year, up 8 percent from the previous year, Xinhua said.

The industry is expected to grow by eight percent every year until the end of the decade. AFP

Lost whale that stole heart of Londoners dies

LONDON—A LOST NORTHERN BOTTLE-nosed whale that swam up the River Thames into central London and captivated the hearts of Britons died Saturday after rescue workers tried to steer it back to the wild.

It ate specialists needed by marine animals and received first on scene, marine experts believed the whale into a barge after beating thanked it when PAMA and sailed it back down the Thames toward the sea.

But the health of the five-to-six-meter whale, ailing and exhausted after its ordeal since its discovery on the barge as it sailed toward the Thames estuary.

"We had a phone call from the vet saying that it had started convulsing and while he was on the phone it died," said Alan Knight, chief of the British Divers Marine Life Rescue group.

"It was still about two hours away from the planned release place."

The time of death was around 7 p.m. Though no cause of death was immediately available, experts had warned that the whale might not be able to cope with the noise and stress around it as well as the pressure of its own weight once it left the water.

They also said its lungs and eyes might have been damaged in the fresh water.

Such a rare sight in London—the first northern bottlenose stood at here since records began nearly a century ago—the good popular wonder, amazement and sympathy, all summed up in a Daily Mail headline "Free Willy!"

And it generated music, the rock trio television coverage.

Hopes had been in suppose of a happy Hollywood ending, as in the movie on which the headline was based.

But when it ended tragically, the news was flooded with sad and mostly e-mails from the public. "So very sad that the magnificent efforts of so many to save the Thames whale were in vain," wrote Ami Bengo.

It had all started as a curiosity when first reports emerged early Friday of a whale in the Islands region when a man traveling on a train called the authorities after

Cabinet decides or health reasons

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MISS AMERICA Jennifer Berry, Miss Oklahoma, poses during the swimsuit competition of the 2006 Miss America Pageant at the Aladdin Theater for the Performing Arts 21 January 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Pope's personal army arks 500th anniversary

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
OPINION

Are gov't men being bribed with pay hike?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

AMID CONTEMPORARY PHILIPPINES IN-somes history, the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will be remembered for its principal policy—bribery. To get what she wants, she resorts to buying people. Money is no object because she is not spending her own money but that of the people. Bribery is the

The latest group of people she is bribing is the government employees. She announced at Fiesta Miranda a few days ago that she would allocate P11.1 billion (that's billion) for increases in the salaries of all government officials and employees.

Where would the money come from? I thought the government is bankrupt, that is why it is increasing taxes again.

Malacañang said it will come from "savings" (hiraings? Pilay can't the government pay its obligations if it has savings?) and... get this... from the unreceived collected when the expanded value-added tax (EVAT) is raised to 12 percent next month. The money has not been collected yet, but the labor is already spending it.

The money has not even been appropriated yet. The P1.05 trillion budget (that's a trillion, the biggest in Philippine history. Filipinos can't even fathom how much is P1 trillion) has not yet been passed by the Congress that is problem-ridden by graft and corruption.

A separate appropriations bill for P11.1 billion for the salary increases has already been filed in the House of Representatives. And House members want to pass the pay hikes even ahead of the regular budget.

Why is the Gloria in such a hurry? Because her popularity rating is still plunging, and at the rate it is going down, it may soon come out at the other side of the earth. Because she wants to save herself from being kicked out of Malacañang.

Yes, she is bribing government personnel to cling to power. She is trying to buy their support and loyalty.

Government employees are not the only ones she is trying to bribe. Even before she was elected, before them, there were the Comelec officials to make sure she won in the 2004 elections; there were the military officers who helped her; there were the administrative congressmen to railroad her pro-rich laws; the presidential staff, led by Ignacio Bunye, to "dish the dirt" against her opponents; the congressional investigations who pejured themselves to contradict damning testimony and evidence linking the First Family to various scandals; and... the kings and an orgiastic in the sun vixen and sons... there were the corrupt legislators kept in line by the pork barrel.

And because they are the main supporters of President Estrada (the man from whom she stole her first presidency) and of her uncle Erap Jr. (the candidate from whom she stole the presidency for a second term), she is bribing the poor with 35 billion pesos of food handouts. Not only did she "rob" (steal; depriving the poor of their two rightful presidents, she monetizes them more beggars.

I suggested in an earlier column that, instead of spending the money for food handouts that would last only a few days, the government should use it to generate more jobs. The poor, I said, needed better jobs more than the handouts that rob them of their dignity. Give them jobs, don't make them beggars.

There billion pesos for food handouts. That's a lot of money. Add the amount in the P11.1 billion salary increases, that will make for P46.1 billion in all! A president sensitive to his poor would not be so slow to generate jobs with that much money. Even more lucrative would that much money capitalize! How many new jobs that would create?

Of course, government employees will want to get their salary increases first. But they should think of the millions of other Filipinos who have nothing to feed their families because they have no jobs. Yes, government employees are not being paid enough, but at least they have jobs from which they regularly earn a little. A little is better than nothing, which is all that a greatest part of our population has. There is no security in the world. Government employees go home with their regular pay, but think of our unfortunate countrymen who walk the streets every day looking for work but go home each day tired and hungry, but with nothing for their families.

Why do Filipinos have to leave their families to work in other countries, suffer loneliness, indignities and sometimes death at the hands of their foreign employers? Because there are no jobs for them at home. The government is hoping that they are making their money and sending home the precious foreign currencies that they earn. But think of the social and family repercussions that the workers and their families have to suffer because of long separations. Many families have become wrecked because of this.

Perhaps, the President should take time to think about all these instead of going all over the country to deliver speeches, cutting ribbons and shaking hands with people, as if she were running for reelection. She is not. She is to pay attention to the things which is the main duty of those trips. So turns to, when we? They don't help her, even with the millions of pesos being spent for those travels. Remember that every time she goes abroad or to the province, she has to take with her many tons of photos, security people, government officials, employees and hangers-on, all of whom are spending the people's money like it's nobody's business.

She wants to be popular again? All she has to do is to stop lying, stop buying votes and do only what is right. If only she will step down, her popularity rating will immediately shoot up.

Lying

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LOCAL MEDIA GARNERED AN INTERESTING item last last week. A Gallup Poll international survey called "The Years of the People" said most people in the world think politicians are dishonest, have too much power and are easily swayed. The survey interviewed 50,000 people in 50 countries. The respondents had a chance to regard the business leaders, but only in relation to politicians—it's pointless and worthless were dishonest; only 45 percent said so of business leaders.

In fact, there is nothing new in that survey, which mostly reiterates the findings of previous surveys on the same subject. In Britain last year, a couple of weeks before the voters trekked to the polls, a survey by Ipsos-Mori showed that only 14 percent of them believed the public "Politicians," some of the respondents said—with an almost Filipino insolence for irony—should instead be called "pa-ko-ra-ma." Tony Blair got the dubious honor of being awarded the second biggest liar in history, next only to Jeffrey Archer. He was followed by, in British vein (but not even Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton), The reason for it, of course, was the "dodgy dossier" he regaled the public with to drum Britain into George W. Bush's war.

In New Zealand last year, [poor thing] discovered from a survey of randomly selected adult Canadians that nine out of 10 Canadians believed politicians were "likely to lie" when they made statements to the media about topics' issues. Journalists were only slightly higher in the Liars Index were journalists and priests—ministers. Lowest were police officers, doctors and teachers. That might very well be the same results for this country, except for the part about police officers. They will probably come second in our Liars Index, next to politicians.

All this merely confirms fairly scientifically what we already know reasonably intuitively. But my thesis does not lie in those findings, it lies in what conclusions we are deriving from them. Chief Ebdane is not pleased? Even lies or masks of both "analyst" and "man in the street" interviewed on TV—err, one, we are no better and no worse than other countries, and, vice-versa—in whatever, you change—no doubt politicians, you get another. There are fabrications, indeed deceitful, conclusions, and lead only to more apathy and cynicism.

There is lying and there is lying. Some lies are worse than others. Some lies are more harmful than others. True enough, Filipino politicians will probably hear even one more in contravention because in the public eye, they are the first category of people that Filipinos are least likely to believe. That was even borne out by the survey. But the fact remains that the survey published then, during campaign in particular, was relatively more benign than the lies Presidential Wannabes peddled when they scrapped elections altogether. The lies peddled by the previous two presidential elections were infinitely more benign than the lies peddled by the non-Democratic GMA after 2004.

Indeed, there is a difference between the lying as a whole first and the lying as a whole second. Two Marcos did, refusing to say (especially he was going to step down after 20?) as he was considered only bound to do. But, for the benefit of the married lana ladies, was one of the things that sparked the First Quarter Storm. The confirmation between Marcos and a group of students led by Edgar Jopson, the latter demanding he put down in writing he would not seek power after 1973. Marcos got furious that a "person's son," as he called Jopson, would challenge his word on him. He began what Ignacio's motto was.

Today, that would be no problem. A group of kids asks GMA to swear off ever running again, and she'll do it. She did it before. It's as Hank Tenzo said about quitting smoking. "It's easy. I've done it so many times." That is a monumental difference. People then took care not to be caught lying because it carried with it public scorn. People now do not mind lying honestly because, at the very least, they can always say it is a "lapse in judgment" and at the very most "Died so what?"

The implications of "pero anoho lang sila," of course, is that it is useless to venture GMA because things are not going to change. That was what Manila Archbishop Emeritus Sandoval said last year—answering GMA asset value every thing—to which I took vigorous exception. I said then—and I said it again—that GMA won't solve everything but is sure as hell will solve a great many things. Not the least of it is that it will restore a squatter to Malacañang, which should restore justice, morality and a sense of right and wrong in this country. For the record, we are willing to bet on the economy. The economy is getting to need the votes, call it a "lapse in judgment," and talk of reforming politics. It is the worst form of destabilizer to commit a crime, call it a misdemeanor, and punish cattle with more points.

Not all politicians are the same. Not all politicians are Marcos and Estrada. It is very true, not all of them are capable of this scale of lying, in the very most, some of them are complacently honest and decent persons. Unfortunately they are the ones who are dying out by the many scores—recently Ernie Maceda. In many things, but you may not accuse him of lying. You may accuse him of many things, but you may not accuse him of subversion. Among the living, there is Jovito Salonga, ironically the same person thought to be old and decrepit but who has outlived everyone who is otherwise physically and mentally vibrant. And honest. He is to GMA as the crucifix is to Dracula.

It's true: As a general category, politicians are untrustworthy. But some are more untrustworthy than others. The latter are the ones we have to be vigilant. Saying they're all the same is giving them birthday gifts.

Doable Charter change

I HAD STARTED WRITING MY COMMENTS ON the output of the Constitution Commission when news on the rejection of the report by a House Committee came out. That was 11-0 million down the drain. The House Committee relegated the Commission proposal to the status of a television movie-of-the-week—a definite act of courtesy but also a mild insult of the courtesy of the COMELEC.

Actually, it's the report now to be debated on the floor of the House, it could be an embarrassment for the Senate, which, in addition, is touted, the Con-Com's draft makes vast shorter than the 1987 Constitution which was much criticized for its verbosity. The draft is shorter by something like 5,000 words. But is that a virtue? I would say that, if the 1986 Constitutional Commission itself had shortened the 1935 Constitution, it would have been a virtue. So much verbiage would have been eliminated. But the shortening proposed by the advisers to ConCom, done through deletions left and right, runs counter to such lapsing questions. How so?

Where a provision is a law, or even just a concept, is deleted, the necessary fear is now is that the deletion is equivalent of the prohibition of the concept. Indeed, that may not be the intention of the author of the deletion, but when the time comes for the application of the law, sure-as-sure will have this executive officer will step past the deletion.

Let us take the Preamble. The Preamble of a Constitution is a distillation of the beliefs and aspirations of the people. Although it is not by itself a source of rights, it can serve as a guide to the interpretation of the other provisions of the Constitution. Hence, it should be meticulously formulated. Of course, it should not be deliberately made by the ConCom wise and done with it, with debate cum and can lead to rather disturbing conclusions.

Let me just cite one example. The 1987 Preamble says that the people, by seeking a Constitution, seek to secure to themselves and their posterity the blessings of "the rule of law and an regime of truth, etc." The ConCom's proposed Preamble has omitted both "the rule of law" and "truth." But then pick the impression that the draft is not particularly knowledgeable concerning the "rule of law" and seeking "truth." When you see that in the context of what the present Congress has been doing, for instance, through the pay raise in RE 4646, you might conclude that the real number thing of these provisions belongs to the person who introduced the ConCom.

But let us try the ConCom report to text and discover instead of what is there, what is not there. At the moment, the overwhelming issue outside the leadership of the House of Representatives and Malacañang, and even within the ConCom, is that the Senate may not be included from the process of revising or amending the Constitution. The constitutional meaning of this is that the Senate is not obligated to accept the provisions of the House or some to a joint session for the purpose of proposing amendments. It's that for the case, a the proposed amendments as all possible outside of joint session?

The power to legislate is given to Congress. But the Constitution does not call Congress to a joint session for the purpose of legislating. Hence, the two houses perform their respective legislative functions in their two, where they are.

The power to propose amendments is likewise given to Congress but neither does the Constitution require the two houses to come to joint session, as it did under the 1935 Constitution. Hence, it is quite possible for the two houses to formulate amendments in the way their respective members they can where they are. Once one house is through with a draft, the draft is passed on to the other house for action.

Since the House is or going for about Charter change, it might view the ball rolling at this stage, it is one is clearly unconstitutional for the Senate to participate in a joint session of the Constitution. The House might want to wait until hardline and double beginnings by formulating relatively isolated changes.

One possible beginning is an overhaul of the Commission on Elections. Provisions pertinent to the senate elections, those that relate to single universal city by the one-head of the Comelec. There is a strong public desire to have the membership of the Comelec changed. But the current members are likely entrenched because they are remarkable as by the impossible process of impeachment. Then...nothing short of the constitutional change can achieve a Comelec reorganization. Should the House succeed in restructuring the Comelec in terms of membership and powers, together with changes in terms of the constitutional provisions on the election process, it may not be easy for the Senate to refuse to participate in such an exercise.

There is no question that the electoral process needs overhauling. Central to the problem is the Comelec. Beyond the Comelec, there are also related provisions in the Constitution which have a great effect on the electoral process. If these can be remedied to little by little, together with other such criteria of the statutory provisions on elections, the benefit that will be reaped can prepare the nation for a more credible process of Charter change.

Valuing Catholicism

A DELAYED REACTION THOUGH. LAST NIGHT, MY immediate superior in the workplace lent me his copy of the film "The Exorcism of Emily Rose." I had never watched this movie and, since I did not expect that the embarrassment would be served out in the film of the political infighting going on among me ruling elite who by the way, all claim to be saints.

If you think that the movie is a sequel to the "The Exorcism of Emily Rose," then Emily Rose is a subtle how-effective his some years back, it is not. Emily Rose, I should say, is a totally more powerful movie. But it does not dwell too much on gory demonic possession scenes, deviating from a trend that used to characterize films of the same genre. Instead, it focuses on the trial of a priest who is charged with "negligent homicide."

The movie is told in flashbacks as the defense attorney reconstructs the events leading to the death of Emily Rose. Erin Bruner, the attorney assigned to defend Father Moore, is portrayed by Laura Linney, who has received her share of awards and nominations for her performance. Linney plays the role of a non-believer who is assigned to defend a priest who is charged with "negligent homicide."

The morning trial scenes that follow play on our minds in many ways. A lawyer known for being a "man of faith" represents the prosecution. On the other hand, Father Moore is represented by a woman lawyer who openly admits she is agnostic. How's that for irony? Anyway, you know.

The history opposites seem to unroll my own real life struggles between science and faith. Science gives us the how. Inevitably, faith is seen in only a realm of possibilities, which functions between possession and delusion as "archaic, irrational and unscientific." The prosecution tries to use science as the point for the "medieval" thinking. Even the priest's own unbelievers refuses to be dragged into the case, because of being labeled as "medieval."

A dramatic point of the movie comes with the testimony of an expert witness for the defense, an anthropologist who is an authority on the exorcism, cultural phenomenon of demonic possession. Although rare, "demonic possession is a cultural universal," she testifies.

Being an anthropologist myself, I easily identified with her testimony. Despite our fixation on modernity, anthropology continues to be perceived as an "exotic" discipline, driven only by "unscientific thought and non-rational beliefs," in a silly world that has made a god out of statistics—a science that do not have basis, let alone basis.

"Emily Rose" has other more important parallels. Father Moore's charity and dedication, his loyalty to Church doctrine, above all his honest faith in the face of persecution, only bring to mind the quality of many of our Catholic priests—those who I had come to know personally or of the same ear as Father Moore. Many of our parish priests behave like little lawyers and are consumed by the temporal powers of their offices. It is no secret that many are driven by ambition to become bishops. Humility no longer seems to be the virtue of the day for the clergy. Perhaps, a good number of them no longer profess loyalty to the Pope. I would like to think that many of our priests today are the ones who are pushing us to our very own Via Dolorosa.

On the eve of her death, Emily Rose went through an out-of-body experience where she "met" Jesus. She asked him why she was being made to suffer a terrible ordeal. Mary told her that God allowed her trial to show the power of good over evil. She was made to choose between living a normal life or going back to the hell she had been through. Emily Rose chose the latter. Her choice was based on knowledge that her trial has been inconceivably assigned to embody believers in demonic argument. Her role was to bring our faith back to its center. She chose to go back. The next day Emily's already her life.

I would like to believe that she was a saint, but her choice was at the end. Today, the many who rate Emily Rose's grace do not miss out the epitaph that she had personally chosen: "Fools, not your own salvation with fear and trembling."

I am not trying to sound self, but the fact is many of us refuse to submit to our destiny.

Our Constitutions, past and present

(Conclusion)

JOSE V. ABUENA OF THE PHILIPPINE JOURNALIST of Oct. 15, 1986, was quoted that: "If we circulate resources to wide scope, depth and symphony, we would not like Constitution to mandating not only development but also transformation, no less than the building of a free, prosperous equitable, just and humane society through a dynamic political, economic, social and cultural democracy. History would test a point if view that latter merely a decade!

Our option for the new government, which sets down to the limits of many of those who had fought for the restoration of democracy through the restoration of the 1935 Constitution. There were made going for the view that held that the 1973 Charter, which had been submitted through a second and by that connection, was never properly ratified. The implication of this was that the 1935 Constitution never ceased to operate. But practical problems faced the new government. First, according to Montemayor, "[t]he institutions it had established had been dissolved." In essence the whole machinery of government in a constitutional by ordained way, Cory Aquino might have had to rely on another provisional charter. The mandate up frightening possibilities at a time when stability was just beginning to be restored. Another massive political exercise would run the the risk of having the ex-authoritarian 1987 constituency but we to confirm and make up for the defects of the 1935 Constitution. Cory Aquino set out all steps, and might actually pull off a victory aided by the forces that had closely stalked they were close by to the new regime. Cory refused to consider holding another presidential election, and the 1935 option was closed forever.

Under the 1935 constitution, two groups of advisers provided—and advocated—different constitutional plans for President Aquino to choose from. A group composed of Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma, Marcelo Fernan and Homobono Adaza advocated the continuation of the 1973 Charter. On the other side were Fr. Joaquin Bernas, the consistently anti-Marcos Napoleon Rama, other illustrious members of politics and other themes recalls "the Lebanese" advisers.

The views of Justice Palma are quoted by Sarmiento: "The EDL members of parliament should be given the benefit of the doubt. The Freedom should accept a little more faith ... we are losing into the reformed society the subversives, the CPP, the rebels, ... to who can't we bring in the pro-Marcos groups, ...even if they are 'bad'? Nobody is beyond redress." Pointing out that, for all practical purposes, the 1973 Charter is dead, Palma said would be used, the group advocated its adoption—at least on a transitional basis. After all, the many elections had been held under that Constitution, and under it the president of the Philippines could only be proclaimed by the Batasang Pambansa. What was correct is the acceptance that took place when the EDL-dominated assembly proclaimed Marcos? All the elections had to do was reconvene, revoke its previous proclamation of Marcos and cast a few grueling days extraordinary powers to reform the government, and just like that, the 1973 Charter would be put into effectiveness. After all, after Marcos fled, 46 EDL MPs defected to the Cory camp, "swelling its ranks" from 59 to 105. Thus the Constitution could be purged of its institutional aspects. Besides, said Cory. The idea of dotting the legislative from Marcos' political and social ills. The Batasang Pambansa legislature was dismissed and its powers given to the Commission on Marcos had given

Preposterous blindness

LETTERS

IT WAS IN OTTER OVERLOOP THAT I read about National Textbooks and Bromsgrove Backstory Director Gracia Angkaw's famous saying in "cannot find the passion of the joke" DESI, L/12/05) forwarding to him, "grinding poverty is not easy to pinpoint." I beg to disagree.

Quezon City for example, has a map of every depressed area. In our own experience, which includes giving free parent/pinion symphonies to Dr manta D'Elementary School, Caloocan City, and other schools in Pasay'an and Bagong Silangan in Quezon City, we have seen and come to know where the poorest of the poor are. We have seen and come to know that the incidence of elementary students needing prescription eyeglasses is SO gruesome. Why? What's the problem? Lack of resources? Administration?

Children are not supposed to need prescription eyeglasses. At one time, an 11-year-old boy fainted in front of me. When he came to, he apologized and said it was because it was Thursday and he was the member of his family who didn't eat on Thursdays!

If the Hindu ritual is truly serious about finding the passion of the poor, I am volunteering to treat him, me, or Cotanchi D Elementary School in Caloocan City. There are 6,000 children there, scattered over a small school operating in three shifts of classes starting at 5:30 a.m. I will show Shivaraj Tantra thousands of malnourished kids who come to school hungry. Fourth graders who look like first graders. I don't blame Hindu for carefully giving me previous food, but to say the passion of the poor can't be found is preposterous.

—LEW EDWARDS,
chamber chair,
1 Inner Chance Foundation,
Bridesmaid, Nepo's Place,
Industria con Economia Inc.,
Sagamihaan, Quezon City 1110

With cheating, we can never be a great nation

READING THE LETTER OF ANTON (by EDR, 12/18/05) added to the frustration. I was frustrated to find another Filipino who likes to be on the sidelines watching our dear country's troopers. I can't blame him because he's a Filipino.

But I think we have to be Gerardo de Quiros and his writings that we still have countrymen who risk getting the ire of those in power. If Dr Quiros portrays our country as one going in the dogs, that's only the sad reality and we should be thick enough to accept this and to make up fools are deep slumber (read: apathy).

If no one among us would dare to call a spade a spade, then we would really be a pastoral state. Imagine yourself in my place, being questioned by foreigners about how we, as a people, could keep silent in the face of obvious cheating. We'd surely feel the way I felt, in detail, unable to refute or just answer the issues that, maybe, most Filipino politicians are cheaters and Filipinos do nothing about the cheating being done in their midst.

We can never be a great nation for as long as we allow cheating to be part of our system. I may not agree with Dr, but I surely will defend his right to say what he wants to say. Maybe, he can say the same thing about Dr Quiros.

—JONATHAN CAMAL,
jonjon44@yahoo.com

Dancing the Cha-cha with the devil

I READ WITH KEEN INTEREST CONRADO DE Quiros' Dec. 27 column: he advised Arthur Spiegel to forget the suggestion for the country to shift to the parliamentary system of government. The title of the problem, he argued, is that we have an illegitimate President and nothing else can be structural surgeries to that. To illustrate his point, he cited that if you switch a wrinkled morning in an empty, you regret him. He then proceeded to extol the virtues who don't agree with him as simply stupid and brainless. Ironically, his reasons against the parliamentary system made me abandon all hopes for the presidential system that we instituted since we gained independence from Spain.

De Quiros used as his principal resources, like Aguas and Garchitorena, switching political parties would be considered treason because parties in those countries stand for an ideological cause or political philosophy. I agree that the Filipino politicians' habit of shamelessly changing parties during elections is repugnant, to say the least.

I have followed closely the conduct of Canadian politicians during elections. The primeministerial system, by the Liberal Party of Prime Minister Paul Martin, impressed with the country to form a minority government. The opposition Conservative Party, led by Stephen Harper, cited as how an early election bid may be owing to narrow the Liberals in passing its proposed national budget. The Conservatives thought they had the numbers but, as most dumb and shining Belinda Bencmarti, a winning seat of the party, joined the Liberal, tilting the balance in favor of the ruling government.

Fellow Conservatives, bitter with her act, called her a "whore." Bencmarti, who used to be a leading Conservative, is now a Cabinet minister, serving the minority government of the Liberals.

My Canadian friends complain about their own politicians as immoral, queer, treacherous and yes, corrupt. But, surprisingly, in a recession not very confirmed by their major newspapers, very few Canadians know they have a federal parliamentary election on Jan. 23, 2006.

Canadians are not too obsessed with politics the way we Filipinos seem to be a symptom of this. During my research fellowship in Germany in the 1990s, the discredited Communist Party decentered and simply changed its ideological name to join parliamentary elections as a small, modest element. So much for De Quiros' "Barely of the Business."

Meanwhile, seeing the old and tired faces of the Marcos regime, the fallen characters of Ed. as it and the opposition party joining forces with GMA' head Jonna Cobb in her re-election, I am opting to arch and dance with the devil I know—GMA's Cha-cha.

—ARLANE Q. ESTRADA,
3 Orchid Blvd.,
Agusa Hills, La Union

GSIS president defends SSS members

THE OVER 25 MILLION SOCIAL SECURITY System members were disgusted when SSS president Corazon dela Paz-Bersaluy signed on Dec. 30, 2005 a commitment to sell SSS' 388 million shares in Equitable PCIBank (EPCIB) to Banco de Oro (BDO) at a bargain price of P43.10 each. But for the Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP), which petitioned the court to stop the sale, it would have received Rs4 P6.3 billion loss for the SSS.

Come midnight public bidding, it was the second time the SSS members were betrayed by their own presidents. The first was when Carlos Arellano connived with then President Joseph Estrada (which Arellano admitted) to buy the shares in PBT for three billion five pesos, and as a huge overprice.

It is even that Winston Garcia, president of the Government Service Insurance System, which has only a little over one million members, should be the one to round up for and open the interest of SSS members, by upgrading to the SSS to join the GSIS in connection with EPCIB's bid to merge with EPCIB. The SSS' and GSIS' combined holdings of 41 percent of EPCIB's stocks would certainly be able to command a good price. Either the SSS members are betrayed again for a third time.

In behalf of all SSS members, we salute Garcia, and wish he were also the SSS president.

—GRACE E. CARAEG,
Acting chair and past president,
Philippine Association of Retired Persons,
7 Espina Compound, Cebu City

Violent fraternities and clones

THERE WAS AN AR- ticle in the Jan. 17 issue of the Inquirer that was deeply revolting of the Filipino psychology: "A history of violence," a Strong Blood article on fraternities.

We are in the fascination the sensational mentality of the Filipino who nurtures the delusion that only his clique is good and worthy, while all the others are bad and unworthy of their worthiness.

The truth is that every "fine member" is an exact mental clone of all the others, no matter what the Greek letters are in the names of their fraternity. There is an element of greed, by the Filipino which is also expressed in their racism.

—ROBERT GARCIA,
robbaran@
rediffmail.com

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Casinos to attract more Indian tourists–DOT

DAVAO CITY—CASINOS WILL BE AMONG THE main attractions that the Philippines will package this year to attract more tourists from India, Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said.

"We'll be going strong on India this year, one of the secondary target markets we'll try to develop along with Russia. Tourists from India are very keen on gaming," Durano said at the closing program for the 20th Asean Tourism Forum (ATF) here.

The ATF, which ran on Jan. 15-21, was one of the most important events in the Asean region. It aimed at boosting cooperation among member-countries for the tourism industry.

Durano said 52 percent of countries who visited the Philippines in recent months came from Japan, South Korea and China.

But while South Korea surpassed Japan in tourist arrivals last year, Durano said the country's tourism industry was hobbled about India.

"This year, we will be going strong on Russia and India, especially in gaming. I understand that casinos are also about to open in Singapore. But (Singapore Tourism Minister) Vivian (Balakrishnan) said it would take about two years for the operation of casinos there to go full swing," Durano said.

He said that gaming facilities in the Philippines are already in full swing, notably in Manila, Lucena, Cebu and Davao.

Singapore, which posted close to 9 million tourist arrivals last year, will soon put up at least two integrated resort facilities, featuring gaming as a major come-on.

Michel Bertaux Bin Grace, director of the commercials sector division of the Singapore Tourism Board, said the Singapore government was now accepting proposals for gaming complexes to be set up in the resort's Marina Bay and Sentosa Bay.

Durano said the lack of rooms continued to hinder the local hotel and resort industry.

Currently, hotels and resorts can only accommodate 3 million people. —Bernadette A. Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Subic reports P3.4-B contribution to treasury

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—THE Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority contributed P3.4 billion in revenues to the national treasury in 2005.

The amount was derived from tax collection here last year, the SBMA said in a statement.

Internal reports of collection agencies here showed that the Bureau of Internal Revenue collected P933 million, while the Bureau of Customs posted P2.5 billion.

SBMA Chair Feliciano Salonga, in the same statement, said revenues in the national treasury was 12 percent higher than last year's figure.

"This is really an indication that business activities here are indeed starting to roll again. As we expect more investments to come in this year, hopefully we can contribute more than that to the national government," Salonga said.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said the SBMA was keen on attracting more investors to locate in the Subic Freeport to generate more revenues that would support the government's development programs and create more jobs.

Edgar Tolentino, revenue district officer here, said the BIR collection included P933 million in income tax remittances of 50,764 freeport workers and 5,000 employees of the SBMA and its subsidiary, Freeport Service Corp. Also, the 5-percent tax on gross income and withholding taxes from freeport companies. PDI/Central Luzon Desk

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Charges vs school officials dropped

BACOLOD CITY—THE deputy Ombudsman for Luzon dismissed the graft and misconduct complaints filed by the Negros Teachers Community Organization (PTCO) officials in La Trinidad, Benguet, against three officials of the Benguet National High School (BNHS).

The case stemmed from the collection of P1.3 million from BNHS students, which the PTCO said it did not authorize.

In a resolution, Ombudsman Rodolfo Elaurel, graft investigation and prosecution officer of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, dismissed the complaints for lack of probable cause.

However, Rolando noted that his decision was "without prejudice as to re-filing."

The resolution was approved by Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Victor Hernandez on Dec. 23, 2005. A copy was received by the respondents only last week.

The complaint was filed by Francisco Gonzalo, a PTCO representative, Desiree Calimag, PTCI Bacolod, are Luzon Bureau.

BIKERS FOR HOPE
At least 500 bikers led by Sen. Pia Cayetano rest in the finish line of the 9th Bike for Hope program at the Bases Conversion Development Authority in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. Cayetano is the chairperson of the Senate committee on youth, sports development and recreation. The bike for hope program aims to promote physical fitness and sports development among the youth. (Photo by Jay Morales)

VFA body seeks hike in budget, workforce

By Tarra Quijano
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—THE Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFACom) wants its budget and personnel increased by 10 to 15 times despite calls from a legislative oversight committee to end the VFA and abolish the agency.

Zenaida Ducut, VFACom executive director, said the proposal to raise the commission's budget from P2 million to P9 million and its workforce from seven to 117 would be reiterated in its 2006 report to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The VFACom, created in January 2006 by then President Joseph Estrada through Executive Order 199, is the government's watchdog on the war games between the Philippines and the United States.

The proposed budget and personnel increase was first raised in the VFACom's 2004 report, Ducut said, speaking to the bicameral panel on Monday.

Ducut said, speaking to the bicameral panel on Monday, by phone from Manila-Cavalcade where he was monitoring preparations for the large-scale Balikatan exercises in February.

"The task is enormous. We can do a lot more with bigger budget and complement," Ducut said.

The creation of the VFACom was in compliance with Resolution 18 through which the Senate ratified the VFA. Its main task, according to the EO, was to ensure compliance with the provisions of the treaty.

The implementation of the provisions of the VFA was criticized following the alleged rape of a Filipina woman by four US Marines in the Subic Bay Freeport on Nov. 1 last year and the refusal of the US Embassy to hand over the accused to Philippine authorities.

The alleged rape was the fifth incident to have happened during or after the military exercises. Earlier cases were the accidental bombing of an island village, the emergency landing of US military planes that damaged a forest, a crash accident during the landing of equipment and a bombing and the beating of a driver in Cebu.

The VFACom, Ducut said, was up to its task and would be supported by the move of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, co-chair of the legislative oversight committee on the VFA (Lacbo), to allot a P1 annual budget to it along with the call for re-elections.

"After the senator's motion, she approached Sen. [Manuel] Villar [appropriations committee chair] to give that budget and he seconded," Ducut recalled of the Senate hearing.

He said the P9-million budget, a third more than the Tourism department's budget, was "measly."

"There's more with the budget," he said.

Ducut said the commission's staff members, four of whom are contractuals, came from agencies that are members of VFACom.

Int'l conference raises RP interest in linguistics

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THE 10TH International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics (10-ICAL) raised the interest of Filipinos in linguistics and language studies, linguistic faculty of the Philippines president Dr. Angela Sarile said.

"The interest of our Filipino participants was more enhanced and strengthened," Sarile said at the close of the conference on Friday, adding:

"They are more interested in having their own research now."

Sarile stated that before, Filipino participants did not give much attention to linguistics. Now, she said, she could see their enthusiasm.

Participants

Sarile said that at the start of the conference, only about 25 percent of the more than 200 participants from over 17 countries were Filipinos. But toward the middle of the meeting, Filipino participation grew to around 50 percent.

The 11-kid, convened every four years and organized by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, was held for the first time in the country in cooperation with the LSP.

"When the participants go back to their respective countries, they will be able to embark on probable exploration of their research," Sarile said.

LSP president Dr. J. Stephen Quakenbush explained that the conference was not after making policy but more on sharing research results.

A total of 168 researches were presented in the four-day conference.

Quakenbush also explained that Austronesian basically means a composition of different languages.

"Austronesian means southern island as it means the languages of the South Pacific and in this general part of the world. This is the largest language family in the world geographically speaking and in terms of numbers and this is actually the second language family in the world. So all the indigenous languages in the Philippines are part of the Austronesian language family," he said.

Quakenbush, who has been a frequent Palawan visitor, said the conference was able to bring together scholars from around the world.

Venue

"Everybody's telling me how much they enjoyed the venue. Being in Palawan is so wonderful, the city of Puerto Princesa couldn't have given us a better welcome. Everyone was really impressed with how Puerto Princesa rose to the fore and provided a terrific welcome" he said.

Annette Ward, a member of the LSP board, said the venue was one of the reasons for the increase in the number of participants.

"I think the attraction was where we said that we were going to have a conference in the Philippines and not on Bundle but in Puerto Princesa and I think that was a come-on for most of the people," she said. Ian Alfred P. Delos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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Pacquiao's mom wanted match to end early

By Angelou Z. Zante
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Time seemed to stop here as almost every household was glued to the television, waiting for the Pacquiao-Morales rematch.

The streets were practically deserted. When Manny Pacquiao won Erik Morales in the current in the 10th round, residents yelled and jumped in jubilation. Many came out of their homes and danced in the streets.

But Manny's mother, Dionisia, told reporters that she was not happy that Morales lasted until the 12th round.

She said she wanted the match to end early to spare her son from a beating.

But she was still thankful her son won the fight.

She was also grateful to the Filipino nation for praying for her son and for continuously supporting him in his boxing career.

Dionisia was rushed to the hospital in March last year when she found it difficult to breathe after learning that her son had sustained a cut in the right eyebrow during his first fight with Morales.

Pacquiao lost that fight.

Yesterday, Dionisia was relieved in Lahuyan village upon learning with supporters, all rejoicing at the victory of their townmate.

Rey Gallegos, chair of the Anatonio Boxing Association of the Philippines here, said he was surprised Pacquiao was not as aggressive as in his previous fights.

Gallegos said the Filipino fighter could have knocked Morales down early in the fight had he fought more aggressively.

"My prediction was two rounds short. But just the same I was confident Manny will win in the rematch," he said.

He advised Pacquiao to remain humble.

"I hope he will take good care of himself and his finances. It is public knowledge that he earned millions in outfighting," the boxing official said.

In Pagadian City, businessman Fredley Lasab, 36, had to postpone Sunday Mass to watch the fight.

"I guess God can forgive me for watching this match first before going to church," said Lasab, a member of the Knights of Columbus and a devout Catholic.

Lasab's son, Elson Mark, did the same.

Father and son had to shell out P300 for a pay-per-view card for their cable TV so they could watch the live broadcast of the fight.

Neighbors swarmed into the house of the Lasabs as the family was the only one with pay-per-view access in the area.

The right of Filet Southerman Jose Miguel Arroyo congratulating Pacquiao after the match triggered catcalls from viewers in Pagadian City.

"Mike Arroyo should have been in Congress for the Senate passing probe. He should not be there to the match," Pagadian Retold, a student, said.

"Mike Arroyo is really not concerned that his wife may be named by whistleblower soldiers," Retold said. With reports from Jeoffrey Maitem and Michael Lim Sarangay, PDI Mindanao Bureau

PACQUIAO'S mother Dionisia prays for a quick win by her son over Morales in their home in General Santos City. PDI/GIL CABAGNOT

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Cheers erupt in mall, plaza

By Tarra Y. Quismundo, Maryan C. Ortiz and Lugen S. del Puerto

THE NICE AND NOT-SO-NICE Filipinos were one in cheering for Manny Pacquiao as he dragged it out with Erik Morales. It didn't matter whether some had paid to watch a live broadcast of the fight in a mall or others saw it boomtown on free TV projected on a giant screen in a plaza.

With every solid hit and knockdown, thousands of beating fans who thrilled not 9500 jumped to their feet and erupted in cheers in the jam-packed theaters of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.

At Plaza Miranda in Manila, men with fan blades, fathers carrying their children, and couples holding hands cheered every time Pacquiao threw jabs and powerful punches in the Mexican boxer.

In an upcoming room at the East Avenue Medical Center in Diliman City canteen, doctors and aides rejoiced when schools caught Morales in the 10th round, sending him to the canvas.

"We showed every round, and we'd tease persons in the other room, where an operation was going on and they therefore couldn't watch the fight, that Manny Pacquiao had fallen," said Pearl Medes, a nurse.

Appendectomy

It was perfect that there was just one emergency operation going on throughout the hour. A 16-year-old girl was undergoing an appendectomy.

"Every break, we'd go to the hallway and just kind of cheer. Pacquiao really great!" Morales said. "Everybody was in a jolly mood."

One of the sailors' relatives even called from the United States to announce that Morales had been knocked down. She could not wait, so everyone knew the result by Round 2.

"It's over for Morales," said Jaime Ilao, 66, at SM Megamall. Ilao fought in small town boxing events in his native Camarines Norte in his youth.

Mark Uy, 16, said: "It's worth it. The fight was great!"

Dressed by satellite from Las Vegas through Asian Sports, the Pacquiao-Morales rematch was a box office hit at the mall, which opened early and showed nine cinemas for the screening.

Sold out

Tickets were sold out two days before the fight, said theater managers, but overwhelming demand prompted video bandits to sell more for the crowd of patrons who patiently lined up although no more seats were available.

Theater officers said they could not reveal actual ticket sales. But based on theater capacities that varied from 800 to 1,500, the viewers, including a sizeable number who stood throughout the broadcast, might have well exceeded 5,000.

"We went here at 6 a.m., and we ran to get in line. My children advised me to just watch here because they knew I was important," said Ilao, who came to the mall with his nose in lieu.

4 hours of screening

Screening roughly an hour ahead of the regular TV broadcast, the mall screenings lasted almost four hours as it featured supporting bouts starting at around 8:30 a.m.

But when a fierce-looking Pacquiao was shown on the big screen emerging from his dressing room at 12:30 p.m., the crowd began an almost chaotic cheer.

Every time the 27-year-old boxing hero landed a brutal punch on the taller Mexican, the male-dominated crowd roared. For them, Pacquiao's punches were like bombs dropped from a fighter jet.

On the edge of their seats, the viewers sympathized Morales' counter punches, and hope about each time he connected. But the mood turned festive when Pacquiao calculated a flurry of his own, hastening his rival who seemingly numbered at every sound of the bell.

"End it now!" a man yelled halfway through the match.

Ecstasy, loses

As soon as Pacquiao did, in 2 minutes 23 seconds into the 10th round, the viewers—yuppies, seniors and teens—were in their feet ecstatic, raising fists and swapping congratulations.

Many pulled out mobile phones to spread the news to friends and family members not watching the hours' delayed broadcast at their homes.

The cheers moved to boos when Pacquiao was shown on screen embracing Team Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, who climbed up the ring with Vice Governor Jose Miguel Arroyo to congratulate the hours' momentous after the fight.

"Pacquiao was in excellent form," Dennis Anagonot, 32, said at Plaza Miranda. "He really makes you proud to be a Filipino."

Lord Garcia, 24, said staying under the sun to watch the match was worth it.

Lance and a friend were straight on the plaza after hearing Mass at the nearby Quiapo Church.

Dancing

"My wouldn't have seen Pacquiao victory had we gone home after the Mass," she said, but even still glued to the giant screen as the library-long building's facade.

Many were also watched the fight were confused after Pacquiao knocked Morales to his knees in Round 10.

"I knew he would win, I knew he would win," octogenarian vendor observed in Filipino, shouting around his friends.

Anagonot clapped the weathered face of Quezon Boulevard as drivers slowed down to glance at the giant screen shortly after Pacquiao won.

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'Hello Manny' . . .

From page A1

It read like this:

"Hello, Manny? Ipalito mo, Ate? (Has will my sons beat?) Eeh . . . ano . . . ano . . . pag nanalo ka, Ate-Andrea ako (Because if you lose, there will be revenge) Hehe."

Cong Jimmy Jr. the vicinity of the umpteenth time last week. First Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez was predicting one over the weekend.

But for a few hours yesterday, the nervousness appeared to have all but disappeared. The nation was mesmerized by Pacquiao's demolition of Erik Morales.

Even then, soldiers took time off from offering salutations to the life of the Armed Forces to watch the Philippine boxing hero go up against Morales's "El Terrible."

The Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines allowed the Magdalo leaders to watch the fight by placing a TV set near their cells, said one officer, requesting on condition that he not be named because only his superiors were authorized to speak to media.

He said Trillanes thought it "humane" to let the rebels of the failed 2003 Oakwood mutiny watch the boxing match, stating restrictions on a lot of privileges since Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon escaped on Christmas Eve.

It would have been a blue day for Arroyo were it not for Rep. Rafael Mariano.

"Everything went well until Mr. Arroyo called up to congratulate Pacquiao," Mariano said, referring to the unusually talkative phone conversation between Arroyo and Pacquiao after the fight.

"Her voice reminded me of the female voice in the 'Hello Garci' audio tapes," said Mariano, which nudged him back to political reality.

Pacquiao's trunks worth an estimated P5 million

From page A1

two months before the fight, according to an advertiser.

"He even told us that the best buy was the space at the back of his shorts, not in front," said the advertiser, who wanted to buy but couldn't afford the space after paying the boxer's fee for a TV commercial.

Pacquiao, who was pitching the ad space himself, told the advertiser that the back of a fighter's trunks was more prominent in TV coverage than the front, the spot was later taken by Mendiola, a cockatoo fan.

Logo spread

During yesterday's bout, shown on cable TV, the raucous reunited at least six product patches on Pacquiao's white trunks—Mendiola, the four clothing lines, Gold Prime coffee, Tatak energy group, Darlington socks and Philippine Airlines.

The red and yellow Bantex on the trunks, which distinguished him from Morales, who was also in white, were part of the logo of the clothing company that has been dressing up the Filipino fighter since his early pro days.

Pacquiao recently hesitated but soon clothing line bearing his initials "MP."

Colors, typefaces and artwork all contributed to the prominence of the logos on Pacquiao's shorts during the bout. An example, Motolite, which was in white unscroll upon on a red background, registered double on TV screens.

As did Gold Peak, which was also white on red.

The rest of the patches were barely recognizable in the dizzying layout.

Celebrity endorsers

Pacquiao is one of the most popular product endorsers in the country today. He has joined the ranks of celebrity sports endorsers like Alvin Patrimonio, Sergio Farao and Lydia de Vega.

The boxing idol now has the advertising clout enjoyed for the longest time by shows his personalities Kris Aquino, Aga Muhlach, Heart Evangelista and Gretchen Barretto, who have cornered the market for product endorsements since the '90s.

Unlike them, Pacquiao peddles his own media units through a billboard company.

He talent fee for endorsing a brand in a tri-media campaign is still nowhere near the paychecks of Muhlach et al. So far, the biggest advertising deal Pacquiao has clinched was worth less than P10 million. The could change, however, with his win against Morales yesterday.

Recently, he added another memorable number—TV5host, fellow starring in a movie, coming a record and shooting a music video, he is now host of a weekly sports program, "Manny Pacquiao, Sports Kid," on Channel 13.

IF THE LOSER OF THE PACQUIAO/MORALES FIGHT WORE THORLOS SOCKS, HE WOULD HAVE PROBABLY WON

If you are a professional athlete, a weekend sports and physical fitness buff or a plain employee who visits the gym after office hours, THORLOS socks is the perfect pair of socks for your sweating feet.

THORLOS socks, that delivers gentleness to your feet, is a product of two decades of extensive research program that started in Statesville, North Carolina. The study focuses on foot injuries and foot troubles.

THORLOS saves case of severe germs of foot exudemonas. These are against: moisture, pressure, shear, circulation, temperature, posture and stimulus. The scientifically design socks are padded to cushion the foot and knee from traumatic cross section fibers that produce a soft, velvet-like yarn with superior moisture transport qualities. This prevents tissue breakdown, callouses, blisters and fungal growth.

THORLOS has structured brands for specific sports such as: Basketball, Running, Hiker's Fitness, Light Running, Walking, Tennis, Badminton, Women's Fitness, Dress and Casual. Thorlos socks are available at Runner's, Planet Road Sporting House, The Athlete's Foot and Tokyo. www.thorlos.com.ph tel 911 0931 to 34

SPACES for patches on Pacquiao's shorts sold for as much as P 1.5 million each.

What politicians said about Pacquiao's win

By Michael Lim Ubac

PRAISING POLITICIANS SET aside their bickering yesterday as they lavishly praised Manny Pacquiao, calling him a "warrior," a "hero," "Asia's greatest fighter" and the "pride" of the Malay race.

"With this fabulous victory, Pacquiao has raised the morale of the Filipino people and made the nation proud of one of its greatest men," Speaker Jose de Venecia said moments after Pacquiao knocked off Mexico's Erik Morales in 10 rounds.

The Speaker said Pacquiao came from a "great line of Filipino ring fighters," from Pancho Villa to Gabriel "Flash" Elorde.

"This is what makes us Filipinos proud of ourselves. Sige nevhalit kamo (Our hands held high before all). This is (what) Manny taught us today," said Rep. Blanca Pamorada, former chair of the House committee on youth and sports.

Administration Rep. Arnil Lapus, chair of the House ways and means committee, said Pacquiao's win augured well for the country's future on the global stage.

Rep. Joey Salceda, a staunch administration ally, said: "Like Pacman (Pacquiao), with her stunning, Persuasive Arroyo still outlast her opponents (G) (2019) by knockout."

The prompted tenkawers party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano to say: "Everything seem well (and Mr.Arroyo called up to congratulate Pacquiao. How sweet (sweetline) that of the Iraqi voice (in the 'Stella Cinco' audio tapes."

Lone party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva said Pacquiao exemplified what the Filipino could do given the right support and encouragement.

"We have a lot of Pacquiao's out there...in the field of information technology, education, maritime industry, architecture, the list can name it, there's a Pinoy or Pinay excelling in it.

"They deserve the support similar to what Pacman is now getting," he said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, January 23, 2006
3rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 Sm 7: 4-17
Gospel: Mark 3: 22-30

The teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul. He died of the demons help him to drive out demons."

Jesus called them to him and began teaching them by means of stories or parables. "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a nation is divided by civil war, that nation cannot stand. If a family divides itself into groups, that family will not survive. In the same way, if Satan has risen against himself and is divided, he will not stand; he is finished. No one can break into the house of the strong one in order to plunder his goods, unless he first ties up the strong one. Then indeed, he can plunder his house.

"Truly, I say to you, every sin will be forgiven humankind, even insults to God, however monstrous. But whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. He carries the guilt of his sin forever."

This was their (the others) they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Commentary

David is shown what he must now do as king of Israel, and will reign for 40 years. David grows more powerful because the Lord of Israel is with him. And Jesus begins to teach and to overcome his unbelief. Jesus is the stronger one who has overcome every man's disease and disgust. His gospel is spoken to his first year him under restraint. Only then can he plunder his house." And he counts those who see him as his disciples everyone every sin except the one who pisses the Spirit. He speaks to his own people who know and should recognize him from the texts and promises. What is this sin? Perhaps only God knows, but it is connected to those of us who reject and speak about Satan (the Shadow of the children of God), calling human beings by that name and accusing them of evil. Perhaps we should be more careful of who lives in the Spirit of God and how we conduct our lives.

Daily Gospel Reflections from Fr. Rhoderick L. Cliff Villegas, Diocese of San Jose City, EPJD. Box 4, Pilipinas, 3100 Quezon City, PO. 921-3994, fax 924-7520, E-mail: cmf@skyinternet.com.ph, Website: http://www.bible.com.ph (Christian Publications, Inc.). © http://christianpublications.com.ph/2006/01/23/the-Philippines/

NAVOTAS opened last week its version of Manila's Baywalk—the 9,000-sq m Centennial Park on the C-4 Road in Bagumbayan. JOEL NAVARRO

Navotas inaugurates Centennial Park

By Nancy C. Carvajal

NAVOTAS HAS A NEW LANDMARK.

Mayor Toby Tiangco inaugurated last week the 9,000-sq m Centennial Park, as part of a week-long celebration commemorating the municipality's centennial.

"With the new landmark, we welcome the next century with hope and the belief that nothing is impossible," Tiangco said.

He described the park as "the one with the magnificent view of Manila Bay and its illuminations."

"My plan to convert the park into another tourist attraction, aside from the fish port which is still the leading generator of the municipality," Tiangco said.

The P5-million park, located on the C-4 Road in Bagumbayan, was patterned after Manila's famous Baywalk. It has pathways fronting the bay which are lined with decorative lamp posts and palm trees.

"Though last minute changes on the promenade plans delayed the project, it is already being enjoyed by private tenders," said Edith Serrano, overall in-charge of the project.

To add to the park's historical character, Tiangco said he would propose to the City Council that the Mangingisda monument, which symbolizes the municipality's heritage, be moved to the park.

Navotas, the country's fishing capital, was declared separate from Malabon in 1906 through the Philippine Commission Act 1441.

Tiangco, however, said the municipality is ready for statehood.

He expressed hope that his dream would soon become a reality for the once flood-prone town which is now almost flood-free.

Navotas is bordered by the Dimasalang, Lapu-Lapu and Tangos rivers and the Malabon channel. When the rivers' water levels rise during high tide, the town's streets become flooded.

Ironically, the rivers which cause floods are also where most residents get their livelihood, Tiangco said.

"Flooding in some streets are now a thing of the past," he added, after the installation of pumps and the construction of dikes to let the flood waters subside more quickly.

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METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

E-load firm loses ₱20M to robbers

By Oli Yap

THIEVES MOLE INTO a marketing firm last week and made off with P20 million worth of computers, phones, electronic equipment, and information database.

Pedro Hizonjo, chief operations officer of Unlimited Networks Integrated Co. Inc., a mobile phone reload marketing company, told the police that robbers entered their office on the second floor of the Lano Building, Aguinaldo Street, in Cubao, Quezon City sometime last week.

He said he discovered the theft on Jan. 19, or around it in past.

Missing were more than 50 Nokia mobile phones, central processing units, a Samsung LCD monitor, customized software applications, and a computer database. Unlimited Information concept), believed to be worth P10 million, the executive said.

Hizonjo added that two hours which contained original invoices for cargoes, tax receipts, financial records, cash disbursements, and other confidential papers were also missing.

He told the police that the office was in the care of Amadeo Barte and Richard Lee when the theft was discovered.

Charges have yet to be filed since the police said they have no suspects yet.

Unlimited is a company engaged in retailing prepaid phone loads from various telecommunications networks, as well as a multi-level marketing scheme for its members.

Nature can't be stopped but ...

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ALTHOUGH THE CITY GOVERNMENT cannot stop the movement of fault lines in Mandaluyong, it can regulate other activities that aggravate the situation by enacting laws.

Mayor Jesse Robredo said an ordinance that would prevent the excessive extraction of ground water by factories could reduce the damage to houses that stand on fault lines.

Right now, there is no law prohibiting factories and commercial establishments in the city from extracting too much water from the earth, said the mayor.

"So, I am encouraging the city council to join in ordinance and whatever they come up with, I will implement," Robredo told the INQUIRER in an interview.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) has partly attributed the continuous movement of the earth in several areas in Mandaluyong to the over extraction of ground water.

When Fachoko pump out too much water from the earth, they create a vacuum which weakens the soil, Art Pobletan, the city's Disaster Disaster Coordinating Council head, told the reporter.

"Most of the factories are located in the eastern portion of the city and the earth in that part is soft based," he said.

The eastern portion of the city starts from the 17-kilometer shoreline of the Laguna Lake up to the eastern road, where the fault lines are "presumed, he added.

Pobletan's office has so far found 25 fissures in the city.

Pobletan, meanwhile, reminded homeowners and house developers of a 1999 ordinance outlining safety measures that must be observed in areas affected by fault lines.

"The ordinance states that buffer zones, five meters marginal to the fault line, must be developed in structures affected by fault lines," he said.

Another provision in the ordinance states that homeowners affected by the disaster would forfeit one-eighth of their real property taxes, he added.

The rate of the discount varies, depending on the extent of damage to the owner's property.

Pobletan advised homeowners affected by the fault lines to go to city hall and claim their tax declarations to avail of the discount.

The Great
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Model SW-275
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Location Map
Projector World

MetroBriefs

Parañaque extends deadline

THE PARAÑAQUE City government yesterday announced that it has extended the deadline for the renewal of business permits and has cancelled those Jan. 20 to 31. The Business Permits and Licensing Office will also remain open after office hours and on weekends until Jan. 31 "to accommodate traders. "By [extending the deadline], we are providing business establishments ample time to prepare the necessary requirements to renew their business permits," Mayor Florante Bernabe said in a statement.

Jocelyn R. Uy

QC celebrates Bible Week

THE MALTESE City gave crowd love boost up a series of activities in celebration of Bible Week starting today, until Jan. 31. These include a thanksgiving prayer of today's Mag-isang Salita (Word) Day, a walk and the Bible Festival of Letters and other religious activities in weekends. Organizing the event are the Quezon City Christian Organization of Barangays (QC-Icon), the Quezon City Cultural and Tourism Affairs Office, and the Office of the mayor. by Rose Isabel Gonzales-Bernal Isidro. In a statement, Mayor and QC-Icon chair Loretta Rosales expressed belief that "renewed devotion to our moral principles is the most productive investment of society." The celebration is in line with Presidential Proclamation 44 and 1991, as well as city resolution 2130 (series of 2005), declaring the last week of January as Bible Week.

DJ Yap

Wanted: 150 additional policemen

QUEZON City needs more than 150 police officers to ensure that residents of the biggest city in Metro Manila, in terms of land area and population, get enough protection. The additional personnel will allow the city police to maintain ideal ratio of one policeman for every 500 residents, according to the city's chief of police, Quezon City Police District (QCPD) director Chief Supt. Nicanor Rodriguez Jr. said that right now, he has 2,500 men under his command. Of the number, 2,000 are uniformed policemen while the rest are non-uniformed, he said. The city, across other lanes, has a population of more than 1.5 million and a land area of more than 171,000 hectares, he noted. The QCPD has 11 police stations scattered in four congressional districts. The policemen in each of its police stations in La Loma, 1st District, Batasan, 2nd District, Novaliches, 3rd District, Kamuning, 4th District, and Kalibo, 5th District, Project 4, 6th District, Fairview, 7th District, Commonwealth, 8th District, Payatas, 9th District, Cubao, 10th District, Project 8, 11th District, Anonas, 12th District, Kamuning, 13th District, and Kalibo, 14th District.

DJ Yap

UP High Class '56 grand reunion

THE UP High School Class 1956 Alumni Association will reach its golden reunion very soon with a week-long celebration from Feb. 23 to 28. Activities lined up for the reunion include registration and cocktails (day 1); a lauik-UP picnic at La Mesa Eco Park (day 2); a luncheon-fellowship (day 3); golf-night (day 4); golf-tech (day 5); and an entertainment night in Puerto Galera, Mindoro and Boracay in Central Visayas (days 6-7). For inquiries, please contact the celebration secretariat through e-mail: argpalma@yahoo.com.ph; fax no. 818-1381; tel. nos. 811-1906/811-1508; or call Dean Oca Wang at 0919-4948139; Bibb Ilagan at 8721462 or 0919-2888513 and Frank Lladoc at 151 2252 or 0919-4948708.

Sto. Niño de Providencia marks 146th year

THE MANAUAG (Sto. Niño de Providencia) will be celebrating its 146th anniversary on Friday, Jan. 27. Environment Secretary Jesse Robredo will be the guest of honor. He is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees of the Manauag Foundation, Inc. The highlight of the celebration will be a motorcade/ procession, which will start at 2:15 p.m. from the Sto. Niño prayer room to the Mary Mother of the Church Parish. After the 3 p.m. concelebrated Mass to be led by Msgr. Philip Soul, parish priest,

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SPORTS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Roddick tumbles out /A28

■ James ends Cavs' road miseries with record /A31

■ Heat struggling to meet their own expectations /A30

Manny's favored weapon punches hole in Morales

Reyes gloves unmask El Terrible as faded fighter

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO WORE PUNCHER'S gloves last night and he used them for what they were intended—to punch a hole in Erik Morales.

After churning all week than the difficulties in their 130-lb rematch would be that he would wear his gloves of choice, the boys turned thrusted by heavyhanded hitters. Pacquiao later dropped Morales is floored 10 before the fight was stopped with 27 seconds remaining and Morales sixth-to-loses, his spirit and face broken.

By then, Pacquiao had repeatedly overwhelmed Morales with his hand speed, body shots, and a scintillating right hand. He was a young man turning the 28-year-old Morales into an old fighter.

Double or ride away from Pacquiao or back him up, Morales grew more helpless as the rounds passed and his younger opponent continued to crowd and bother him from every angle.

"I was getting hit a lot in the head," Morales (48-8) said after referee Kenny Bralton stopped the fight. "As the rounds went on, I was getting tired. At the end, I felt slow."

There because by the end he was slow, find seemingly arthritic any ways to repel the constant assault by the 27-year-old Pacquiao (41-3-2, 32 KOs).

"The gloves helped a lot," Pacquiao claimed. "I liked my gloves. I could see he was having problems taking my punches. I had less problems taking his. He never hurt me.

"I landed a lot more different punches this time. I started to get to him to the body."

Those body punches took a toll on Morales, who had seen their first meeting last March in Mexico pay because for set Pacquiao's eye easily and left him bleeding so badly that it impaired his vision from the fifth round on, and seemed to break his concentration.

This time, however, nothing impaired him, most especially not the tide of Morales,

MANNY Pacquiao attributes his win to his religious conviction, his fighting heart and the Reyes gloves which he was not allowed to use in his first fight with Erik Morales. AP

who has lost three of his last four fights and seems to have become an old road fighter's answer to a familiar neighborhood that has turned into a dangerous place.

"The 6th hurled in the sixth round," Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach, said. "He (Morales) was feeling from body shots. Manny needs to work on his defense, but his right hook was beautiful."

New York Times News Service

The Ford Everest. The powerful, tough and true SUV. Now with leather seats. Available on the 4X4 and 4X2 Automatic Transmission Models.

FORD EVEREST

Chandler lifts fresh Giants

MVP2 T-Giary Clemfpots up a shot despite a hailfrom Purefoods' Jun Limpot.

By Jane Navarro

ARE3 THE OILLED THE LEAGUE'S GIANTS IN THE PLAYOFFS, BUT PROBABLY NOT the real giant.

The Purefoods Chunkee Giants teased an Manpoto Chandler's brandy performance to subdue the fourth-weary Kapeng 44-209 at the start of their San Elig Coffee-Ohn Florio Conference semifinal series last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Unstoppable from all angles, Chandler tallied a conference-high 46 points and pulled down 16 rebounds, including a breakaway Binder in the dying seconds that sealed the upstay of the best-of-seven duel for the finals.

Barangay Ginebra outplayed Red Bull Barako to overtime to win, 100-100, at the start of their own semifinal showdown.

The Barako foiled by 11 points at the end of the third period but rallied to force the extension at 89-all as Enrico Villanueva beat the regulation buzzer with a follow-up of a Jason Perez miss.

"Sir, if Chandler (pinoy) had been offensive, prime but not current (just only on him," said Purefoods coach Jerry Cacpotio, flush from a three-week respite after sweeping an eliminate semifinal slot after topping the semifinalists round.

"I'm sure they'll (Express) be ready for him defensively on Wednesday," Cacpotio added (Game 2 is set on Wednesday).

Playing four third game in as many days, the Express were surprisingly unscrapped up contrary to what many had anticipated.

The Express had booted out De Jun Miguel Beermen in the wild card phase and eliminated the Tide 'B' Red Phone Pole in the quarterfinals.

Randolf De Ocampo and Jayson Castro also joined the Express to use (87-34) lead before relinquishing it.

Willy Kobe Raymundo and James Yap looking up Chandler. Purefoods rested their debut and held. At ground against (42-2) Arnaporo early.

"We were there to match their intensity and emotion. But it's good, by a learning because they played their game on a story," said Cacpotio.

Symmetric flow early when Manny Seal Raymundo got into each other's game with Chandler and Gary David engaged in a scuffle that stopped the game for about the minutes and triggered a flurry of technicals near the end of the third.

Earnd, last week's PBA Press Corps Player of the Month, had helped propel Purefoods to the biggest win of his career.

GAME WINNERS
(Barrio Calzone)
4:45 p.m.—Barrio
(Sr. Gumtown Bar)
Bull Barako
2 Elia vs—Barrio
Santi vs Ar11

...

But in single, it just so happened that this special dish is called by a different name in these parts.

What?

It's called pachero, but it's actually my mother's glorious cuisine-ar-ola.

Don't leave out. It's just cruelties but this phase is being realized, a couple of hours at Mister Peregrino had done the miracle feat of dragging Bill Maestro, the most see mappable Mexican boxing great.

I regret: Peregrino could not state because there are more good signs that had registered his ultimate success.

Like the blues celebrated by a Filipino priest, Jimmy Reed, who flew all the way from New York yesterday.

Peregrino, it was hinted, had had strained ties for lunch, little soup around 1 p.m. before meeting out of his table at Wyndam Hyatt for the rendezvous with Maestro yesterday.

There are many little things, revered in or of the Silver, for the Express with 16 points while Castro had 15 points and 17 boards.

Express
Red Bull
PUREFOODS—Jacobs 46 Ng 14 Raymundo 12 Regis 2 Jaspert, Ap 3, Dixon 2, Ian 2, Castro 2, Salenga 0 Arnaldo Dillham 0.

MEN 86.—Dalet 16, Dodds 11, Blank 14 De Ocampo 12 Mendoza 12, Asoro 8, Lanuza 4, Mak 3, De Ocampo 2, Gonzales 0, Lee 0 Ian 0.

Quarters 20-10, 40-31, 74-71, 88-86.

Scorebook

GINEBRA (R)—Bost 20, Cagulo 23, Jarin 20, Arboleda 0, Ambrosio 0, Wilson 0, Dela 2, Ildefonso 1, Dimaculangan 1, Ebarapad 2, Aidoo 0.

RED BULL 106.—Perez 31, Yeptah 23, Villanueva 12, Olivarez 10, Parnell 8, Lao 2, Bagtas 2, Gamalo 2, Fonacier 2, Bugtai, Abbaszeh 0, Enrico 0.

Scores: 30-31, 61-61, 87-92, 100-100

Manila Ice by any other name is still it

BARE EYE

Barak Ironkid

LAS VEGAS—THERE'S A SPECIAL ZEAL boiled to blissful perfection in my mother's semi-gour kitchen, that I unquestionably rediscovered in a Filipino restaurant—nay, Sizzling Aloe—in this paradise-ing gambling arenas a couple of days back.

It's the most coldness, cheese, tomato sauce, chili and other magical rule, served with a steaming plate of rice.

I first found that gorgeous hot dish nearly two decades ago, when my dear Mom could still do what she loved best. Cook what we, her sons, loved best.

I have often given up tasting that unbelievable dish again.

You know what? I told the Texas Mexicanoes of Cebu, namely Romeo, Julius and Tom, Peregrino can't lose his stomach with Bill Maestro.

Why, they cheered.

Because you're tackled me to this magical dish.

Still, the ride from Cebu wondered, but what has it got to do with Peregrino's eleven.

...

But in single, it just so happened that this special dish is called by a different name in these parts.

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HEROES CUP

Tangkay leads race for PBL MVP trophy

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE LEAGUE'S TOP team rightfully has the top man.

Alvin Tangkay, the crimson gunner of the front-running Team Shine, garnered the highest statistical points to lead the race for the Most Valuable Player prize in the PBL Heroes Cup.

The 6-foot-3 Tangkay amassed 1,000 statistical points at the end of the elimination round after averaging a league-leading 16.83 points, 6.8 rebounds, 2.1 assists and 1.1 steals.

"He's now a team player," said Team Shine coach Caloy Garcia of Tangkay, who strongly tied for the MVP award in 2004. "He has improved as a player."

Tangkay remains 38 points ahead of Super-PCCI's Jason Castro, who took the second spot with 328 points.

The Southwestern Bees forward guard tallied 14 points per game and ranked first in assists at 4.2 apg and fourth in steals at 1.9 spg.

Pil-Am Jet Dyoxen chipped in third with 202 points after leading the statistical race midway in the conference. The 6-foot-7 center of the ordas dwelling Toyota Otis Heights collected 21 ppg, 9 rpg and 1.5 blocks per game.

Top rebounder Kelly Williams and fellow Bees, Mapúa ace Cesan's 1-2 punch, still remained in the hunt for the top individual award.

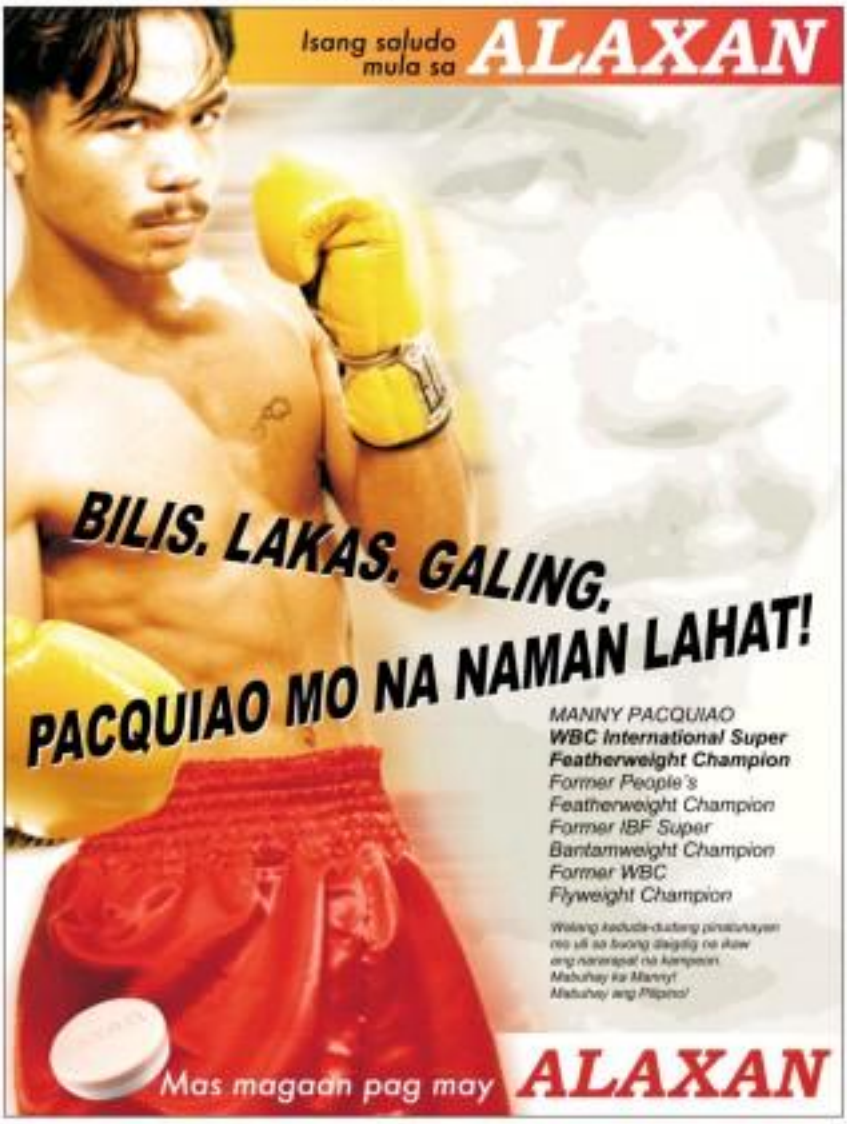
Williams, also a 6-foot-7 Pil-Am, was just a point behind Dyoxen with 201 points. He logged in 12.4 ppg and 10.1 rpg, while Cesan earned 201 points after averaging 9 ppg and finishing third in rebounds at 9 rpg and second in steals.

Hacks for the second-running Wildcats.

Rounding up the top 10 were Pil-Am center Bob Hayes of Rafthaus Cocoa with 200 points (9.71 ppg and 9.9 rpg), top block shot artist Jay-R Reyes of Rain or Shine with 279 (8.4 ppg, 8 rpg and 2.1 bpg), Joseph Yeo of Rafthaus Cocoa with 282 (10.2 ppg and 4 rpg) and Super-PCCI's Rabeni Bana with 259(9.6 ppg and 6.8 rpg) and Gabby Espinas with 253 (10.2 ppg and 8.7 rpg).

Meanwhile, the semifinal round starts on Thursday with Rain or Shine tackling Rafthaus Cocoa, and Magnolia Ice Cream taking on Granny Goose.

Rain or Shine and Magnolia, the top-ranked squads, entered semi-game in accordance to the best-of-five series. Thus, they only need two victories, while Rafthaus Cocoa and Granny Goose must win the tie to advance to the finals.



Roddick tumbles out

Greek gives A-Rod the boot; Sharapova gains

MELBOURNE, Australia—Andy Roddick tumbled out of the Australian Open on Sunday, losing 6-4, 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, to unseeded Marcos Baghdatis in the fourth round.

Roddick, the No. 2 seed, was unseeded by the high-energy Baghdatis, a 20-year-old former junior world champion from Cyprus.

After dropping just one set to serve up his three previous matches, Roddick was broken once in each of the first, third and fourth sets. Baghdatis had 14 aces, one more than Roddick, and only 16 unforced errors.

"He just is my own world and playing great tennis," Baghdatis said. "I think it's one of the best wins here for me."

Baghdatis, ranked 16th, advanced to a quarterfinal against the winner of Sunday's later fourth-round match, No. 7 Guy Lidbi, and No. 10 Tomas Johansson, the 2002 Australian Open champion.

It was a disappointing exit for Roddick, the American who had a shocking first-round loss in the US Open—Andre Grand Slam event.

"I didn't play that badly—play eighteen winners is not—I looked and I was more used points," said Roddick.

Earlier, top-ranked Lindsay Davenport set up a quarterfinal match with Amelie Mauresmo, overcoming left ankle pain to beat Svetlana Kuznetsova, 6-4.

The eighth-seeded Mauresmo, Gardener beat Virginia Ruano Pascual, 6-4, 6-3.

Fourth-seeded Maria Sharapova owns down a break in the second set before recovering to win six of the last seven games in a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Daniela Hantuchova, who ousted defending champion Serena Williams in the third round.

Sharapova now faces fellow Russian Nadia Petrova, who beat Elena Vesnina 6-3, 6-1.

In men's matches, fourth-seeded David Nalbandian reached the quarterfinals, beating Tommy Robredo, 6-3, 6-0, 2-6, 6-2, and French veteran Fabrice Santoro overcame No. 11 David Ferrer, 6-4, 7-5, 7-5.

The 33-year-old Santoro avoided the last eight in a Grand Slam for the first time in 64 trips.

Ninth-defending champion Marat Safin, second-seeded Rafael Nadal, four-time winner Andre Agassi out because of injuries and No. 3 Lleyton Hewitt ousted in the second round. Roddick was unashered during yesterday's topple to seventh Roger Federer.

AP

MARIA Sharapova stretches to return to Elena Dementieva during their fourth-round match at the Australian Open yesterday.

FABRICE Santoro of France celebrates his fourth-round win over David Ferrer of Spain at the Australian Open.

'Magician' makes long drought disappear

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—[illegible] on to his comrade from behind the head in [illegible] and shed a few tears of joy.

April '03, and pleasing in his 54th Grand Slam, the proud Frenchman finally made it to the quarterfinals of a major.

He beat 12th-seeded David Nalbandian of Spain, 6-4, 7-5, 7-5, Sunday to a fourth-round match in the Australian Open.

"At one point, it's great class it's coming so late," said Santoro, who played his first Grand Slam at the French Open in 1989. "Two boys playing since I was 16, and when I was first quarterfinal, one less at 33, it's a long time."

Next against his doubles partner—38 career titles and a pivotal role in France's 2001 Davis Cup title triumph—"The Magician," as Peter Johnson once dubbed him because of his unique style, has always struggled in singles at Grand Slams.

He's lost in the first round of majors 21 times, the second round on 18 occasions, the third 11 and each fourth-round show times.

One of those fourth-round losses came at the 1998 Australian Open, the victory at the 1998 and 2001 French Opens.

Still, he's finished 2005 ranked in the top 100 in singles for the 14th time in 15 years, and he has been career-high to rules.

Santoro said Sunday's result might have been different if the key temperatures hadn't found the roof in Melbourne Arena to be closed. That gave the players shade and air conditioning instead of an unrelenting sun and the near-like wind.

"It was pitched outdoors, I think his chances would have been very, very small," said Santoro.

"When I woke up this morning and I saw the temperature, I said 'OK, we're gonna play indoors,' and then it was another ballgame."

The signs have been good since the tournament began, with Santoro beating Vincent Spadea, Andrew Ponti, former French Open champion and eighth-seeded Gaston Gaudio and then 14th-seeded Federer.

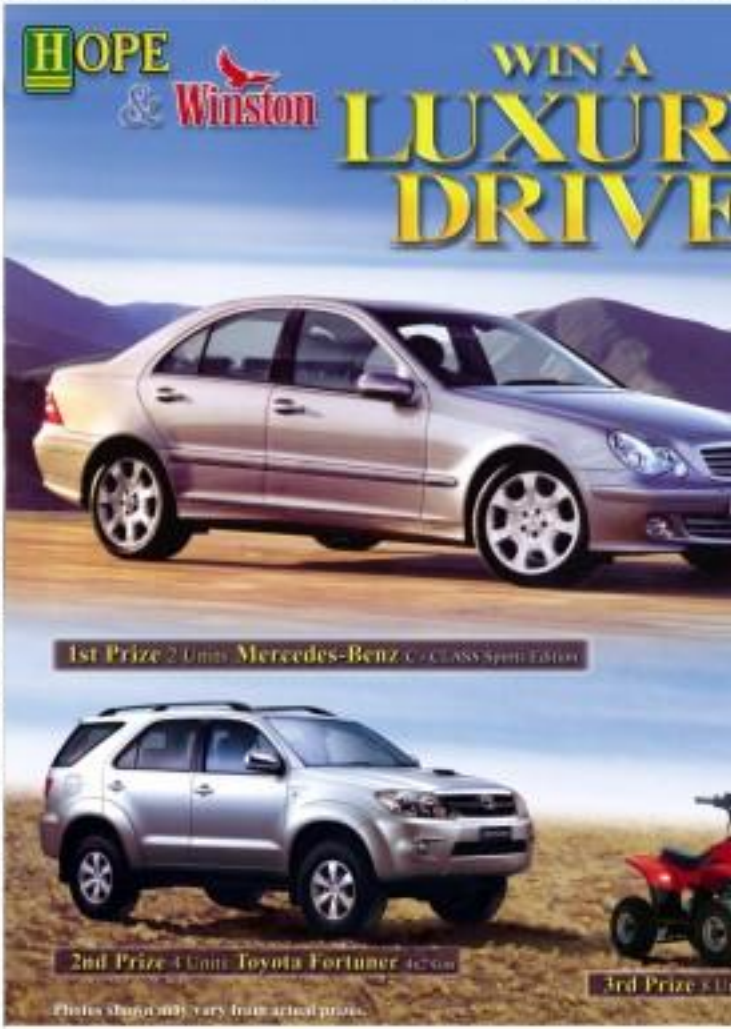
Next up: a fourth-seeded David Nalbandian, whom Santoro beat on clay in Rome last year in three sets.

"Player, you have no time to rest," said Santoro. "Every opponent makes you run and I hope that tomorrow's court will be pretty high and we can play indoors."

Santoro said the reason for his success here is his recent change in style—attacking serves, coming to the net more and pressed by being more aggressive.

"I am still in the tournament because I'm coming into the net a lot," he said, attributing his doubles work-making him more comfortable at the front of the court.

AP



Government Warning: Cigarette sm

Campbell hangs onto Hope lead; Verplank narrows gap to 1 stroke

PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA— Chad Campbell's 5-under 67 was barely enough to keep him in front Saturday in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic, with Scott Verplank's bid moving him within one shot of the lead.

Campbell kept up his steady play with an birdies and a lone bogey at the new Classic Club at Westfield to go to 24-under 264 through four days of the 90-hole tournament.

Verplank rallied his 9-under round at Bermuda Dunes Country Club, one of four courses used for the last four days of the tournament.

A pro-am for the first 72 holes, the 72-hole event has always played the final round at the Classic Club.

John Senden was alone in third after a 67 at Bermuda Dunes, left him at 20- under. Lurking another two shots back was two-time Hope champion Phil Mickelson.

Mickelson, the winner in 2002 and 2004, shot a 67 at Bermuda Dunes to go to -18 under, on similar off the court. Making his season debut in the Hope, Mickelson was tied for fourth with Aaron Baza, who had a 66.

Mike Weir also won the season-start in 2003, was another that behind after a 66. Still another former Hope champion, 2000 winner Jesper Parnevik, rushed into contention with a 10-under -62 at the Classic Course and was only 4 shots behind Campbell entering the final round.

Rory Sabbatini and Jeff Maggert had 68s to join them at 22, along with Otto Browne 66s and John Mahaffey 67s.

Campbell finished four holes on the front nine to make the turn at 32, but a bogey on No. 11 seemed to throw him off stride and he shot a 36 on the back nine. On the 12th, he hit a 6-foot long, then left himself a 15-footer for par and missed it for the bogey, only his second of the tournament.

Verplank, meanwhile, was solid throughout en route to Campbell's lead.

He rolled in five birdie putts on the front nine to make the turn with a 32, then kept it going with birdies on the first two holes on the back side. With Campbell already finished for the day, Verplank sank a 6-foot birdie putt on No. 14 to get to 23 under, then bogeyed No. 17 when he hit into the water before a 6-foot par save on the last hole.

Campbell's bogey on the 12th was the first time he made the turn at 32 but a bogey on No. 11 seemed to throw him off stride and he shot a 36 on the back nine. On the 12th, he hit a 6-foot long, then left himself a 15-footer for par and missed it for the bogey, only his second of the tournament.

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Both Stephen and Campbell are trying to end winless streaks. Verplank hasn't won since the 2001 Canadian Open, and Campbell is looking for his first victory since the 2004 Bay Hill Invitational. Retief Goosen shot an 68 to get to 8 under for the tournament and Justin Leonard was solo in seventh at 6-under 66 for the tournament. AP

Jaca floors Mexican foe in 1st round

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—PHILIPPINE SUPER featherweight champion Alexis Jaca knocked out Mexican journeyman Geronimo Bermudez in the first round of their eight-round clash at the Thomas and Mack Center yesterday.

The 22-year-old Filipino southpaw from Silvino, Negros Oriental floored the tanned, lanky fighter without Joe Cortez stopped the bout with 2:43 gone in the first round.

Jaca's ring debut in the US was in his second of the Manny Pacquiao-Rick Hatton onwards.

"Alexis has become an instant hit. He has received many offers to fight here," said Jaca's manager Boy "Pinkee" Salud, who was at ringside.

After the fight, Filipino and Mexican fans immediately mobbed Jaca by the ringside at the Thomas and Mack Center later at the Wynn Hotel, he was again seen being greeted by the hotel's seasoned clientele.

"This was a fight from the kid who made his fight for a living inside a military camp in Mexico," said a boxing observer, citing Jaca's humble beginnings before he was discovered by Colonel Saud Jaca, from whom he got his ring name.

Jaca's came from a combination of his real name Ismael Divino and that of his manager Boy Salud.

The win improved Jaca's record to 20-1-1 with 12 KOs. Bermudez, 37, who was the third boxer tapped by promoters to fight Jaca, lost for the 10th time in 51 fights.

Before winning the IBF super featherweight title, he robbed Orlando Salido of his IBO super featherweight crown. Ball

Jaca, from Negros Oriental, floored Bermudez in the first round of their eight-round clash at the Thomas and Mack Center yesterday. AP

Manila Ice . . .

From page A26

and leaving the technically superior Mendoza in his own juice.

No, we need call it an overhaul, because Pacquiao still always be Pacquiao, Boxin explained.

So what's the name of the biggest ingredient behind this recipe?

He scans. Boxin explained.

All they had to do was learn from their biggest mistake the last time.

They no longer underestimated Morales, unlike the last time when Pacquiao had to upped the would-be-win on the Mexican point.

Pacquiao acknowledged Saturday said, just like the reporter with the audacity to a showbiz scene, was rewarded sufficiently.

Lisogor breaks own swim mark

BERLIN—OLEG LISOGOR BROKE HIS own 50-meter breaststroke world record tonight at a short course World Cup meet.

The Ukrainian, who turned 27 two days ago, swam 26.17 seconds at the Arena meet and lowered his old mark by .02. He set the previous mark on Nov. 26, 2005, in the same pool.

"It was time for a new world record after four years," Lisogor said. "I temporarily repaired for this event in Berlin and shaved my body—I deeply wanted to swim a new time."

The two-day meet has drawn 100 world winners from the Olympics, world or European championships, but a dozen swimmers missed Saturday's competition because weather conditions delayed their flights from Copenhagen.

The swimmers included record holders Anton Lobik, Thorsten Alkhammer and Anna Ris in Rummelsburg. AP

noking is dangerous to your health.

James ends Cavs' road miseries with record

SALT LAKE CITY—LEBRON James scored 51 points, becoming the youngest player in NBA history with 5,000 in his career, and the Cleveland Cavaliers snapped a six-game losing streak with a 108-90 victory over the Utah Jazz on Saturday night.

James wasn't even sure he'd play because of a sore right knee he had keeped earlier in the day, but decided shortly before the game to see how it held up. It looked fine as James and the Cavaliers twisted going combine on a six-game road trip.

James, who turned 21 on Dec. 30, needed 41 points to pass Kobe Bryant as the youngest player to reach 5,000. Bryant was 22 when he scored his 5,000th point.

James left to a standing ovation with 1:51 remaining in the game and the Cavs won for the first time in two weeks since a 96-88 victory over Cleveland on Jan. 7.

In Indianapolis, Andrew Bogut scored 26 points and Tyson Chandler added 23 points and 14 rebounds for Chicago, which ripped the Indiana Pacers, 103-89.

Rick Hitsch added 20 points and seven rebounds as the Bulls handed the Pacers their worst home loss of the season.

Stephen Jackson scored 21 points and reserve Austin Croshere added 16 for the Pacers, who lose for the second straight night and the third time in four games.

Indiana forward Jermaine O'Neal struggled in his return after missing three games with a sprained left ankle.

In Orlando, Florida, Steve Francis had 19 points and nine rebounds, and made four free throws in overtime as the Magic zipped the Sacramento Kings, 83-78.

Francis also made the basket that forced overtime on a layup with 21 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Vince Carter scored 25 points and Jacque Vaughn had a season-high 13 markers off the bench to help the Nets demolish the Boston Celtics, 123-83.

Jason Kidd added 16 points and Jason Thompson scored 15 for New Jersey (32-16), which has won 13 of its last 17 games. Boston (16-24) lost for the sixth time in nine games.

Paul Pierce led Boston with 20 points. A night earlier in Boston, the Celtics shot 51 percent and held off a fourth-quarter New rally in a 99-96 win.

In New York, Chris Paul had 27 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds to lead the New Orleans Hornets past the Knicks, 109-98.

David West scored 19 points and Desmond Mason added 16 for the Hornets (20-20), who have won five of their last six games.

In Milwaukee, Michael Redd scored 23 of his 25 points in the second half to help the Bucks limit the Charlotte Bobcats, 101-93, to improve to 6-0 against Charlotte.

NEW Jersey Nets superstar Vince Carter goes airborne for a dunk against the Boston Celtics Saturday night. The Nets crushed the Boston Celtics, 123-83.

Heat struggling to meet their own expectations

CYWILL: Looks mortal

MIAMI—IT JUST LIKE LAST YEAR. Dirk Miami Heat will lead the Southeast Division at the season's midpoint and seem on the way to securing a fully seed for the Eastern Conference playoffs.

The list of similarities because this season and last essentially end right there for the Heat.

So, they're in first place by a comfortable margin and entered Saturday with the sixth-best record in the league. But a 22-17 mark after 39 games isn't what the Heat envisioned coming into this season, especially one with a team that entered the year looking to lose goal was to win the NBA championship.

"I don't know why we're losing," first-year Orlando Magic coach Brian Hill said. "We'll get it right. We've just got to keep working."

Miami considers the halfway mark of the regular season on Sunday when it hosts Sacramento. The Heat are already on victories behind last year's pace, and needs to go 38-6 down the stretch if they plan to match the 59-win regular season of a year ago.

There is no sense of panic.

No overwhelming sense of confidence, either.

"We're having too many fundamental mistakes," Shaquille O'Neal said. "We need to learn how to overcome those."

O'Neal is averaging career lows in virtually every statistical category, including scoring (18.5), field goal percentage (.546), free throw percentage (.462), rebounds (9.5), assists (1.3), blocked shots (1.45) and minutes per game (38.5), and is searching a career high by averaging 4.0 fouls per game.

There are only seven other players in the NBA averaging both as many points and rebounds as O'Neal—but more is always expected from the man who made $27.7 million last season, will make $9.88 million over the next five years and finished second in the MVP balloting a year ago.

But while O'Neal looks mortal, Dwyane Wade insists that the Heat still have plenty of time to get rolling.

"In this league, you know, you lose games, you come in and you get beat," said Wade, the third-year guard who's averaging 26.9 points, 6.9 assists and 6.2 rebounds this season. "We've got 42 games left."

There's four teams that clearly make up the NBA's upper echelon to the point: Detroit, San Antonio, Phoenix and Dallas.

The Heat is 6-11 against that four-some this season, including Friday's 104-94 home loss to the Spurs. And against the teams that had records better than .500 entering Saturday's games, Miami is a measly 5-14.

How does Heat coach Pat Riley feel about the start?

"I don't care," he said.

"We can get beat by the worst team in the league and we can beat the best team," Riley eventually continued. "But there's going to be a time when we're going to have to beat them all."

The Heat is 10 1/2 games behind Detroit in the race for the top seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs, so put that gap in perspective, entering Saturday, the top eight teams in the West were separated by 10 1/2 games.

Still, if the season had ended after Friday's games, Miami would be the No. 3 seed in the East—yet with a record only four games better than eighth-seeded Washington. AP

Miñoza finishes joint fourth; Pagunsan stumbles with 76

FILIPINO PRAISER MIÑOZA closed out with a flawless seven-under-par 65 yesterday to finish in a tie for fourth place with Malaysian Iain Steel in the $260,000 Palmeras Open men in recovery fashion by British Chris Rodgers at the Tarzan Golf Club.

The second former winner of the Asian Tour's Order of Merit swung up five straight birdies from the 10th to climb from 20th spot and became the last Filipino finisher after Arnie Pagunsan stumbled with a 76 to finish joint 36th in his first professional event.

Miñoza, who finished in 27th spot in last year's OOM with earnings of close to $123,000, played the final two rounds at 20-under after opening with a 67 and a 68.

Nick "Caesar" Cacas shot his third straight sub-par round, a 66, and wound up in a 22-it place tie with Britain's Richard Moir at 266. Moir shot a 71.

Pagunsan, the former amateur hotshot, had just one birdie against five bogeys, two of them counting on par-5 holes as he failed to sustain a first-round 67 in the first three days to earn him a lot of money in the end.

Angelo Que, the 2006 Castlerock Masters Vietnam winner, also had a tough time, shying to a final round 79 that pulled him down to a 46th place finish. Que's 67 and 68 netted him 12th spot in 268 spot, closed out with bogeys on the 16th and 17th holes and his second double bogey for the round on the 18th.

Arnauld Lacosta and Gerald Escudero tied for 42nd along with Aussie Gavin Kortum and Thailand hotshot Kiratiwa in 280 spot, closed out with 71s after rounds of 71 and 70, respectively.

The 29-year-old Rodgers failed to crack 70 for the first time in four days, settling for a level 72 for a 13-under 275 total and a four-stroke victory over India's Jeev Milkha Singh and Amandeep Johl. Singh and Johl carded identical 69s.

Homeowners Ivo Mohammed Mosin, tied for second with Mel Mendoza at the start of the day, dropped into a tie for fourth with Miñoza and Steel after a closing 75 that featured three straight bogeys from the 13th.

European Tour veteran Mendoza of Wales was even worse, shooting a 78 to finish a seven-out of the Top 10 at 281.

Ashok Kumar of India shot a 72 and, Germany's Jochen Lippstin carded a 70 for seventh place at 280.

A total of seven Filipinos made the halfway cut but only only Jhonne Delarmente Cooke (of) failing to advance.

Lakeshore nat'l triathlon lures big names

THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE LOCAL triathlon scene, including the Filipino medalists in last year's Southeast Asian Games, are taking part in the Lakeshore National Triathlon championships on Jan. 29.

A total of P134,000 in prize money is up for grabs as sides in one aquasprint event—the 750-m swim, 20-K road cycling, 5k run and the Olympic distance of 1.5 k swim, 40 k bike, 10 k run—will be disputed.

Those in 2005 triathletes led by SEAG silver medalist and defending champion Sander Aventajado and former medalist Arland Macatoch have already signed up for the event supported by the provincial government of Batangas.

Other notables in the field are veterans Ani Lavina, Noel Salandot, Cherie Calbocanos and the up-and-coming MIBF Quilala, Mont Lucas, LC Langit, Aande Severino, and Elan Mangonbang.

The organizing Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Tap) will be using the championship to start its preparations for the main Games in Doha, Qatar, in December.

Entry forms are available at the Tap office at Unit 1602 Cityland Tower, 10 Ch Palo Alto Street, Makati; the POC office at the Rizal Memorial Complex; and Speedo stores in Mahang Town Center, SM Megamall, The Podium, and Glorietta 4.

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MABUHAY MILES MASTERS

Top business executives join "Bong" Revilla and Stewart Go raid the major prizes in the recent Mabuhay Miles Elite invitational golf tournament at the Metro Golf and Country Club. Tee Jr.(fifth picture) won the low gross title while Go (center in right panel) received the trophy as overall net champion from Philippine Airlines president Jaime J. Bautista, as executive vice president Manny Sy (2d) looks on. The two executives have a field of over 300 players, all Elite and Premier Elite members of the airline's Mabuhay Miles frequent flyer program. Tee scored a three-over par 74 while Go finished with 142-68.

PCAP derby today at Makati venue

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Kalo, coaches of 4 semifinalists in Forum

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Treat sports well

CLEAN LIVING
Manuel V. Pangilinan

Philippine National Games (PNG) in November to serve as a final tune up for the national athletes who will see action in the Doha Asiad.

On the merged budget of P26 million approved by the Senate last week, PSC chair Williams "Butch" Ramirez said he would "make do with what they approved," adding he failed to convince the finance to at least match the previous allocation of P34 million.

* * *

MORE ON THE ASIAD: From a respectable 14 gold-medal harvest in the Asian Games in Manila in 1954, the country's medal performances dipped in succeeding Asiads. In 1958 in Tokyo, the Philippines won nine golds while in 1962 in Jakarta, the Filipinos won only seven. It was also in Jakarta where the Filipinos, the preraid Asian Games basketball champions, held the cage title for the last time. But the Asiad produced two sporting legends, including the irrepressible Mona Sulaiman in track and field where she reserve the Asian funnel records in both the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes to become Asia's fastest woman. In the 1966 Asiad in Bangkok, the Philippines won only two golds through Josephine de la Vina, who ruled the discus throw and hoists Rodolfo Aquino to the 1970 Asiad, also held in Bangkok, only boxer Ricardo Serafino bagged the gold.

The Filipinos were shut out from the gold-medal race in the 1974 Tehran Games, the first time since 1951 when the Philippines took part in the inaugural Asiad in New Delhi where the Filipinos won five golds. Athletics has not been a gold medal in the Asiad since 1966, but Lydia de Vega, the speedster sprinter from Marikina, Makati, broke the spell by topping the 100-meter clash in 1982 in New Delhi. She repeated the amazing feat in 1986 in Seoul. Rosie Kidlat Jolmes won the lone gold in 1990 in Beijing while three other pugs, Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, Elias Recalde and Reynaldo Galido, captured three golds in 1994 in Hiroshima.

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MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Connie S. Narbona

PC BUYER'S GUIDE
The No.1 Computer Magazine

Gov't pump-priming plan gets boost

30% of VAT proceeds to go to infra projects

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE SAID THE GOVERNment's better-than-expected fiscal position last year would allow it to undertake a major economic pump-priming program for 2006 without sacrificing its deficit-reduction goal.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier directed the Department of Budget and Management to allot P35 billion this year for pump-priming activities largely related to infrastructure development.

The plan to boost spending on infrastructure raised doubts on the government's commitment to continue reducing its budget deficit until it reaches as early 2005.

But in a discussion paper on budget-related issues, the DOF said the government would not abandon the target of slashing the deficit to only P122 billion this year. It said the pump-priming could very well be absorbed by the government improving fiscal condition.

Higher-than-programmed revenue collections last year coupled with belt-tightening measures allowed the government to register a budget deficit of last than P144 billion, or much better than the official deficit ceiling of P150 billion set for 2005.

Official budget deficit data for 2005 will be released today.

Makasiar

WHAT'S INSIDE

Top firms to test Globe 3G system /B4
Gov't expects billions in savings /B14
Tonyboy P20B poorer /B5

UCPB seeks debt-equity conversion

By Doris C. Dumlao

Fancies. Whims. Finds.

IRRESISTIBLE
END-OF-SEASON

COLE HAAN

We can end poverty

OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SAY that 24.7 percent or one out of every four Filipino families is poor, based on the 2003 Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES). On a benchmark basis, 30.4 percent of the population are poor.

Using the same data, Bess Reyes and Pigozzi estimates that almost 50 percent of Filipino families are poor.

The Social Weather Stations (SWS) reports that as of December 2005, 57 percent or more than one out of every four Filipinos describe themselves as poor.

While the numbers may widely, it is clear that poverty in the Philippines is unacceptably high, whichever number one chooses to believe.

Measurement

Why the wide differences among the estimates?

Even though based on the same data, the governmental estimates and those of Bess Gil-lao widely because of very different assumptions on what level of income makes one poor. Government places the poverty line at P12,105 per person a year, or P33.15 ($0.64) a day. This translates to P5,211 a month for a family of five, which is now the reference basis for anti-poverty government programs.

On the other hand, Bess estimates that a person must have at least P75 ($1.43) each day, or P902.39 a day and P1,676.27 a month for a family of six. Incidentally, the IFS and World Bank have been using $1 a day as a global benchmark to analyze of poverty reduction that can be compared across countries.

Multiple dimensions

SWS' Mahar Mangahas believes that there is no better judge of whether a person or family is poor than they themselves. Thus, their poverty incidence data are based on the number of survey respondents who answered yes to only a few questions asked. If they feel poor (mahirap), instead of defining some threshold family or individual income that can be subject to question.

But approach a lost more credence by the wide recognition that poverty is more than just lack of income, but has social, economic, environmental, political, cultural and spiritual dimensions as well.

I coin found myself in a discussion with a group from a small affluent country where economic poverty is considered non-existent.

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

As the discussion progressed, there soon got from them a deep hunger, a poverty of a different dimension, particularly in the cultural, political and spiritual spheres. They even expressed envy for us Filipinos, who they considered as culturally anchored to these dimensions of human welfare. Given the authoritarian tendencies their government is known for and the continued wave of their culture coming from a country of several ethnic groups, their sentiments did not surprise me then. You record big macroeconomic with people from a supposedly "rich" country confirmed my conviction that poverty goes well beyond not having enough income.

Not inevitable

I said almost every speech or presentation I make with the following observation: Official statistics tell us that one of every four Filipino families is poor. But this also means that 3 of every 4 families are not poor. All it takes, then, is for only one out of those three non-poor families to help lift every poor one poor family out of poverty in a sustainable way (e.g. support one of the children's education through college, assist the family establish a viable livelihood, etc.), and we can wipe out poverty in this country!

Members of my audience would invariably question the practicality of only one poor family out of four, especially given the three and 1995 figures. Most of the supposedly non-poor probably do not have enough to share, they argue. I reply with a story shared by a woman in a Bible-sharing session my wife had attended years ago in a squatter community. One morning as she and her children were preparing to eat their simple meal of a small bowl of rice sprinkled with salt, they overheard their neighbor's children plaintively crying out in hunger to their mother. Upon hearing the neighbor tell her hungry children that there was no food to eat, the woman decided to share half of their meager meal with the neighbors. If the poor are capable of sharing what

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UCPB seeks debt-equity conversion

From page B1

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Top firms to test Globe 3G system

By Cherissa S. Batino

GLOBE Telecom Inc. HAS INVITED PROMINENT corporations to "test drive" its new 3G or third-generation network.

Among those are Ayala Land, General Milling Corp., Iron Libo of Canada, Pru Life UK, SM Philippines and the Aboitiz Group of Companies, said Globe PLC statement.

The joint ventures between Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom is set to launch its 3G service by the end of the March.

Pierre rival Smart Communications Inc. is also prepared to soon offer new-generation services, such as video calls, high-speed data downloading and video streaming.

Initially, 3G will only be available in Metro Manila and limited to subscribers with 3G-capable handsets and 3G SIMs.

A video answer/see until a video call, for instance, may cost about P35 a minute compared to regular calls that now run as low as P3 centavos a second.

Globe said it would lead in 3G, just as it had pioneered text messaging in the Philippines.

Smart, however, said it would offer a more superior service after it received the highest 3G ranking from the National Telecommunications Commission as well as the largest 3G frequency band.

Smart signed last week an agreement with Nokia for the supply of 3G network equipment and services.

Last week, Smart, Globe, Sun Cellular and Connectivity Unlimited Resources Inc. paid a total of P108 million in fees to the NTC for the use of 3G airwaves.

Smart paid P333 million while the three players paid P65 million each.

"Smart is committed to offer the best 3G services to the market. As of today, deliveries of equipment and services are underway," said Smart president Napoleon Nazareno in a statement.

Nazareno said Smart would spend about $60 million for 3G in its first two years of operation. Smart said the deal with Nokia would allow it to offer cost-effective 3G services.

"As the expectations for 3G are high, this deal ensures that we will be able to keep our market leadership," said Rolando Peña, Smart's division head for network services.

Gov't pump-priming ...

From page B1

line is to be used for economic pump-priming this year would be taken from the savings arising from the lower-than-programmed deficit last year. The "savings" is viewed to by the Palace was not in the form of actual cash but only an ellow room for additional expenditure because the deficit was lower than programmed.

The DOF noted that of the P81.4 billion in additional revenue to be generated this year from the newly implemented VAT Reform Law, 38 percent has already been officially programmed for pump-priming activities.

This means that the P120 billion target deficit for 2006 is already factored in the planned additional spending for infrastructure and other basic services.

"The pump-priming will involve increasing expenditures in the first semester to take advantage of the dry season and realize the impact on growth within the year," the DOF said.

Now that the budget deficit is increasing, the government is focusing on improving the country's infrastructure, which poor state has been largely blamed for discouraging the entry of foreign investments.

Tonyboy P20B poorer

BANKER JOSÉ CHAIR ANTONIO "Tonyboy" Cojuangco Jr. has all the more reason to lose his voice. Last week's Supreme Court decision ordering the "all-portion" Cojuangco family to relinquish shareholdings in favor of the government sets worth, as of Friday's market closing, more than P20.8 billion.

The holding company Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. owns about 25 million PLDT shares, of which 44 percent were being claimed by the Cojuangcos. Prime's PLDT shares were valued at P1,760. You do the math.

Make the court victory is in most kinds that the club-strapped government would sell off its newly recruited wealth, but such as Peter Bocobo Cojuangco, already owning 54 percent of PTIC, it is not easy to find other bidders that would shell out billions to exchange for a minority position.

Bocobo had to be quiet yesterday, the Supreme Court decision after years the way for the backdoor years of the aggressive NTT docile subsidiary DoCoMo into PLDT ownership allowing the true Pacific rivals, and more importantly, without bumping up the 40 percent direct foreign ownership limit on telecom companies.

Both the First Pacific Group and its Japanese ally and DoCoMo's parent, NTT Communications, already own nearly 30 percent of PLDT with NTT to control up for 13.98 percent.

In consequence, First Pacific bosses and Lucy would think it was "considering the acquisition of additional (PLDT) shares," shying aside to disclosure that it had bought about 2.6 million common shares from the market via the last few months.

The Hong Kong-based conglomerate said it has some loans had to be done so as to prevent its stake from being diluted by the conversion of preferred shares being held by other investors and even PLDT executives.

Despite the acquisitions, First Pacific said its PLDT stake has now slightly fallen to 24.1 percent from the pre-conversion 24.2 percent. PTIC Holdings, incidentally, are equivalent to 14.5 percent of PLDT. The Cojuangco-now government block in PTIC translates to an indirect 8.356-percent stake in PLDT.

Footnote: New PCGG Commissioner Narciso Nicto Jr. was the promoter of the pro-Cojuangco Sandiganbayan decision that has just been overturned by the Supreme Court.

Club rigodon

PLDT school Tagaytay Highlands general manager Nick Gokiat is literally moving across the road to assume a similar position in the most-sophisticated Tagaytay social.

In contrast to the 1,200-hectare Tagaytay Highlands, 50-hectare Tagaytay is a more modest 22-hectare venture. Still, the

COCKTALES

Tiketer ca Agustin

planned resort is backed by the financial muscle of Singapore investors as magnate Lucio Tan's Fortune Cigarettes Holdings and his local partner, Ambassador Antonio Cabangbang Chua of Rom-ne Enterprises and Cityview Mortgage Bank.

The Singaporean-led group plans to build eight, six-story suites condos along the ridge-side resort, selling hotel-room sized residential units at P1.6 million.

At that price, it seems unit will quickly move for Big Boy Banzon.

According to the grapevine, the property, which adjoins the sprawling Splendido golf and country club of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, is not expected to remain under Gerardo Mendoza Boy Rodolfo S. Valencia. Boy a 20 percent partner. Valencia is in charge of marketing Filipinos' Tagaytay property investors and solicited ex-Pilipinas Shell chairman of securing a vacation home and weekend retreat just on Jose's drive from Makati.

Meanwhile, Caldron's orphanage resort in Tagaytay Highlands, Lion Hs Villanueva, filed for bankruptcy. the last working day following his weekend appointment, saying the lawsuit decided to accept the offer of Rockwell Chairlet secondary position.

Luckily, Highlands had a quick replacement, in the person of Jo-ianne Mabel Montana, who for years years was the resort's food and beverage director before she became Manila Peninsula's general manager.

The blame game

HSBC, they blamed the rising price for their woes. Now, they have evaded their lack of access to deposits. Now the expected group running Export and Industry Bank is blaming Urban Bank for the Export Bank's declining profitability.

Hs-so-under former Urban Bank chair invests Bartolome III is blowing his top these days. "Before Bank acquired Urban Bank five years ago," Bartolome said in an e-mail. "With the acquisition, Export Bank was able to post a P3.6-million profit for its first merged year, versus their pre-merger net income of only P3.9 million." It was, he says, Export Bank was on a downhill slope, spiraling to just over P1.5 million profit in 2004 and possibly even a loss in the year just past. "Export Bank executives should just look at the numbers and blame themselves for their own inefficiency and poor productivity," it ticked off Bartolome said.

Heard through the grapevine

PBAT Gruderman Hilke Arroyo and his congressional son, Mikey, will likely extend their overseas stay should the President heed the advice of a number of Malacañang advisers. The lightning rod duo was originally scheduled to return to Manila a week after watching the Pacquiao fight in Las Vegas.

Email: cocktales_phil@yahoo.com or cocktales_phil@yahoo.com

SMIC war chest to fund EPCIB takeover

By Dianne L. Lucas

THE HEAVY SHAPED CONglomerate's move to raise more than P6.1 billion from foreign investors is in preparation for an controversial acquisition of Equitable PCI Bank, according to a ranking official of the group.

In a reply to inquiries quotes yesterday, Renee de Ore, president and CEO Hester Tan said the funds may be used to boost the group's holdings in the country's third-biggest bank.

"[The] proceeds [from the sale of global depositary receipts] will be used for various SM investment projects, including the purchase of more EPCIB shares should it become available," he said.

Their statement may be an indication that the SM Group is preparing for a more aggressive merger battle with existing shareholders of EPCIB and other potential buyers of the bank, if any.

Last Friday, SM Investments Corp. unveiled a plan to raise up to $110.8 million through the sale of global depositary receipts (GDRs) for its subsidiary. SMIC said it will issue up to 9.1 million to GDRs priced at $12.76 each.

GDRs are bond-raising instrument where a bank can offer to issue in a foreign country for shares of stock traded in another company. The underlying shares are held by the local branch of an agent-issuing bank, and can be traded on the overseas stock market.

Tan said this mode of fund raising will help bring in more foreign investors into one of the country's most attractive retail and banking plays.

"[The] GDRs will allow foreign investors to buy into the economic benefits of RCBS-history, without forcing the foreign ownership ceiling," he said.

From page B2

little they have (and they often do), arbitrate with those of us who have so much more? There is nothing I had no more to pass on to my children, my friends, and leaving you to believe to need something from others.

Indeed, if only there were enough caring and sharing among us Filipinos, poverty need not be such a curse.

Errata

Readers have pointed out two flaws in my recent column. The new

E-mail: pi_info_tech@inquirer.com.ph

INFOTECH

Editor Lee Phegan

Internet access cost dropping fast in RP

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

THE COST OF DIAL-UP AND BROADband Internet services is going down fast in the Philippines, enabling more Filipinos to go online.

An unlimited Internet dial-up account bundled with phone service costs P840 a month, according to Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) execs.

The growing popularity of broadband access has forced traditional dial-up Internet service providers (ISPs) to reduce monthly rates, said Rep. Joseph Santiago, noting that "the cheapest dial-up Internet access now is P168 monthly."

That bundled PLDT service costing P840 monthly covers basic monthly landline service and unlimited Internet access. A landline residential subscriber paying about P600 monthly would have to add just P240 to get an Internet dial-up Internet access.

Independent dial-up services even offer unlimited Internet access services for as low as P12.50 per day or P399 a month. Previously, the cheapest Internet service was about P35 a day or P748 a month.

Santiago, who is vice chairman of the House transportation and communications committee, further said that inexpensive Internet access is expected to draw more subscribers this year.

PLDT for one reported about 35,000 broadband Internet subscribers as of September 2005, an increase of 34 percent over its 49,200 users in September 2004. Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. had about 20,000 wireless broadband subscribers at the time.

The market research firm International Data Corp. projects Internet users in the Philippines to double from 11.8 million at the end of 2004 to an estimated 28 million by 2007.

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Obscene Kama Sutra worm targets vulnerable PCs

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

AN INTERNET WORM HAS BEEN DISCOVERED spreading a variety of pornographic photos and movies to trick people into launching it and discarding security software, security experts in England said.

The "Nyxem-D worm" is now spreading through e-mail. When launched, it attempts to disable a number of antivirus and firewall products, also harvesting e-mail addresses from infected computers in order to spread further.

This new Internet worm is also known as "Email-Worm.Win32.VB.kf" or "WIN.Blackmail.Lightning."

The e-mail that carries the Internet worm uses a variety of subject lines, such as "Hot Movie," "Nude sex 006/46405.jpg," "Kama Asana.pps," "Pro-Anti.mpg," "Paris Casey file.pif," "give me a kiss," "Miss Lebanon 2006," "Part 1 of 6 Video clip," "School girl harasses game host," and "The Best Videoclip Ever."

"Companies should reinforce their users to practice safe computing—that includes never opening unsolicited email attachments and discouraging the sending and receiving of joke files, pornography and screensavers," reminded Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant for Sophos.

"This worm feeds on people's willingness to receive salacious content in their dealings company, but they could be putting their entire company's data at risk," he added.

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Nokia bags Smart 3G network contract

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT firm Nokia has bagged a contract to supply local operator Smart Communications with third generation (3G) network technology and services.

The contract covers the supply of 3G radio access and core network equipment, including the Nokia High Speed Downlink Packet Access solution, 3G upgrades to the existing circuit and packet switched networks of Smart, and other related network services.

Smart did not disclose how much the contract was worth.

"Smart is committed to offer the best 3G services in the market. As of today, deliveries of equipments and services are underway. The investments under this contract will allow us to establish quality nationwide 3G coverage in the shortest possible time," said Napoleon Nazareno, Smart president and CEO.

Nazareno noted that the operator has been testing a number of 3G cell sites and content such as streaming video clips, which can already be previewed at demonstrations in some of its wireless centers in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu.

Smart was among the four local operators recently granted licenses to operate 3G services in the Philippines by the National Telecommunications Commission.

Officials previously indicated that the operator expects commercial 3G services to become available in the first quarter of this year.

3G is a faster mobile communications network that supports the wideband code division multiple access (WCDMA) standard. It allows for faster data transmission speeds, making possible high-speed data communications and mobile multimedia services like video conferencing, audio streaming and mobile Internet.

Smart conducted a live test of its 3G capabilities in December 2005 in Cebu City.

During the demo, the company showed a live video conference call online to network and set demonstrations of streaming call between the operator and NTC chair Kida Mollis.

SMART officials said that the company started preparations for a seamless transition to 3G as early as five years ago with Nokia.

"In December 2000, SMART in cooperation with Nokia conducted the first successful 3G video call in the country in the presence of NTC officials. Using experimental equipment, the test call recorded data transfer rates of up to 316.9 Kbps," the company added.

Smart has been working with Nokia as its sole network supplier since 1998.

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RP Software firms earned P9.2B in 2005

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE PHILIPPINE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY earned approximately P9.2 billion in 2005, a 36-percent growth from 2004, according to the Philippine Software Industry Association (PSIA).

This was a better performance than 2004, which saw a P6.7-billion revenue increase.

The sheer PSIA report is based on the survey responses of 46 member companies representing the majority of the Philippine software industry's top earners.

The foreign market still accounts for 87 percent of all business in the Philippine software industry. Revenues from software development amounted to P6.3 billion, 56 percent of which came from foreign sales.

Software implementation and consulting contributed P707 million, of which 75 percent were recorded in the Philippines.

This is the second such survey conducted by the organization. PSIA President Dennis Yang said recently. The first was in 2004, where the PSIA consolidated the reports of various software development and sales firms.

"We'll be doing this every year since it's part of our Fly High 2010 strategy. We want more Philippine software firms to grow their businesses both locally and abroad," Yang said.

RP exporters eye bigger share of decor market

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL EXPORTERS ARE JOINING the world's leading trade fair for home accessories in a bid to gain a bigger presence in the growing market.

According to the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, 11 local exporters are joining Ulrichsmesse 2006 in Frankfurt, Germany, on Jan. 20-25.

Glenn Israel and Trade Assistant Secretary M. Aguinaldo-Reyes attended these as Baliet Export, Buena Mano Crafts Inc., Craftasia Export Company, L&A Designs, Linton Designs, Magellan Manufacturers, Marketing Corp., Philippine Concrete Trading Corp., Philippine Treasures Inc., Sulit's Crafts, Sunport Craft International and Switchkicks/Soothies.

The participating SMEs are expected to generate sales totaling about $1.5 million, which posted combined earnings of $776 million or at least P43 billion in 2004.

The country's biggest export markets for products related to furniture and upholstery were the United States—which bought $56 million or about P2.75 billion worth of goods in 2004—Germany and Japan.

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'06 list of preferred investment areas readied

Focus on expansion and diversification

By Roland W. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT'S LOOKING UP A 2006 Investment Priorities Plan that is geared mainly at maintaining current operations and stimulating expansion with the nationwide environment.

Official documents show that representatives from various government agencies held last Friday one of a series of meetings to discuss and draft the 2006 IPP.

The new plan would continue to support the administration's programs of addressing poverty and encouraging globally competitive industries.

"The underlying focus is still to improve economic opportunities in the country and to generate jobs, provide food and deliver basic services," according to the documents.

"The new IPP will also give greater emphasis on the modernization of industry activities to ensure the efficient movement of goods and people," according to the document.

It, likewise, aims to provide the support for the development and use of new technologies that would help improve productivity, the paper added.

The new plan will also retain the 11 investment areas identified in the Medium-term Philippine Development Plan as preferred activities to qualify for incentives.

Full incentives under the IPP include tax holidays, duty-free importation of capital goods and other fiscal and non-fiscal perks.

The 11 investment areas include agri-business; healthcare and wellness products and services; information and communications technology; electronics; motor vehicle products; energy; infrastructure; tourism; shipbuilding; shipping; jewelry; and fashion garments.

Aside from these preferred activities, other areas are included in the IPP as specifically required under existing laws.

Covered by mandatory inclusion are industrial tree plantations; iron and steel projects; explosives; mining; quarrying and processing of minerals; prohibition or privatizing of banks or textbooks; and refining, storage, marketing and distribution of petroleum products.

The IPP covers activities involved in the ecological solid waste management; the promotion of clean coal technology; and in bilateral agreements, and the substitution, self-development and self-reliance of disabled persons.

Fishers and scientists unite

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

IN THE MOVIE "SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE," the character played by Rita Hanks was desperate because he just lost his wife. He was called a radio station and that led the character played by Meg Ryan to friends' character. They fell in love and found happiness. In a sense, this is what is happening between our fishers and scientists today.

Sleepless in Hong Kong

During the WTO Ministerial Conference from Dec. 13 to 18 last year, leaders from the fisheries sector sleepless in Hong Kong. They were busy dealing with a non-paragraph "trade capacity" strategy consistent with the Abyssus Agit Rubrum engagement approach.

Inside the conference hall, Antonio Tinio Ruling of the Tambuyog Development Center or TDC, who was given official observer status by the Philippine government, argued for fair trade for the fisherfolk. Outside, Buddy de la Cruz of the Kilusang Mangingisda coordinated a rainbow convoy for the same cause in Hong Kong harbor, escorted by four Hong Kong government boats. This was in addition to being the only non-government group allowed in the conference premises to personally deliver their petition.

It was during this time that the scientists reported to the TDC through e-mail the existence of the anti-environmental Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order No. 26, which allowed a 25-year lease, renewable for another 25 years, of portions of the country's 266,000 square kilometers of coastal areas for development by outside investors.

Municipal fisherfolk who were developing many of these areas through Fisheries Management Agreements (FMAs) were being displaced without due process.

While leaders from the fisherfolk were sleepless in Hong Kong fighting injustice in the world trade regime, other injustices were being committed on the domestic front.

An example

Pedro Salparosa, general manager of Zaragoza-Bulfat Island Multi-purpose Cooperative, told on the experience of the Multisio Resource Management Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Cebu. Because of the DENR order automatically cancelling all CBFMAs in eight regions, MRAMMPC was forced to stop all their CBFMO operations.

Salparosa said: "The MRAMPC has planted more than 1 million propagules to the barrens under their care. A DENR order automatically canceling all CBFMAs without giving credit to the years that have preference very well, such as MRAMPC, is oppressive and grossly unfair."

The proposed benefits are significant. Approximately 500 people earning at least P200 a day collecting shells during the two hours of low tide have lost their livelihood. They can also no longer gather the leaves they use as feeds for their domestic animals such as their goats and carabaos. Most importantly, the mangrove areas they have upgraded will no longer serve as effective spawning grounds for the fish stock the small fishers depend on.

The fisherfolk believe that the cancellation of CBFMAs without due process is meant to prepare the ground for big investors to come in through EO 26.

Upon hearing the cancellation of the fisherfolk, a DENR undersecretary was quoted by an business report as saying: "We just

COMMENTARY

My just have to change the title or make some clarifications on the EO."

Jurgenne Primavera and other members of the Philippine Association of Marine Scientists met with Environment Secretary Michael Defensor to object to AO 24. They argued that CBMAs were the most effective and profitable way to take care of the ecosystem areas for the nation's benefit. As a result, DENR Director Angelo Ylaya said, "Sec. Defensor has ordered to form Pro-Tem to closely evening the AO based on their observations."

Impact on uplands

CBMAs are also implemented in the uplands. Boots Maboloc of the Kanlungan Foundation points out that the cancellation has already affected 75,000 farmers in the uplands of Region 9. He says: "Since the government does not have enough resources to protect the forests in upland areas, the CBF. MAs have become an effective alternative. The responsibility has been given to people organizations. However, with the automatic cancellations of all CBFMAs, our forests are now deprived of protectors and our people of their livelihood. Selective cancellation with criteria and due process is good, but not automatic arbitrary cancellation."

We are happy that Secretary Defensor has listened to the combined call of scientists and fishers.

A forum involving the DENR, scientists, fishers, upland farmers and indigenous peoples on this issue to stop injustice and come up with a win-win solution will be held on Jan. 24, at 9:30 a.m., This will be at the Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. It is free and open to the public. Call Diana Unson at 926-4411 for details.

In "Sleepless in Seattle", the characters of Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan met through radio and achieved happiness. While sleepless in Hong Kong, the fishers united with scientists in the Philippines through e-mail and had succeeded in opposing the original AO24.

It is hoped that greater unity will be forged between scientists and our less privileged sectors such as fisherfolk, farmers and indigenous peoples. This way, equitable programs and projects will hopefully be achieved in our nation.

For inquiries and suggestions, email agrimatters@yahoo.com or telephone 52-01-16-25.)

Globe tops NTC Q4 network monitoring

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE TELECOM INC. TOPPED THE NETwork monitoring conducted jointly by the National Telecommunications Commission and the Philippine Chamber of Telecommunications Operators in the fourth quarter of 2005, a joint NTC and PCTO report showed.

Among the three major mobile players, Globe's quality achievement rate highest ranking both on calls connected on first attempt and on completing calls.

Network audit had to be done to resolve issues on traffic congestion and to determine whether the carriers were meeting the NTC performance standard.

It also addressed claims by Globe and Smart Communications Inc. that Next Mobile failed the performance benchmarks of NTC.

Based on the monitoring done by the NTC and the PCTO, the umbrella organization of Philippine telcos, 98.21 out of every 100 calls to Globe were connected on the first attempt and 97.06 out of 100 calls were completed without being dropped by the network.

Smart Communications Inc. scored slightly lower with a call setup success rate of 97.82 percent and 97.06 percent on call completion.

Sun Cellular of Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc. scored poorly on the setup success rate but had achieved ranking on call completion.

The tests showed Sun connected on the first attempt only 66.61 out of every 100 calls but it completed 96.23 out of every 100 calls.

NEA gets P20B for rice procurement operations

By Christine A. Gaylican

STATE FARM NATIONAL FOOD Authority was given by the Department of Finance a borrowing ceiling of P20 billion for its grain buying operations and rice inventory building activities, NFA Administrator Gregorio T. Tan Jr. said on today.

NFA is tasked to ensure food security by maintaining a buffer stock of rice, and to keep rice prices affordable while giving farmers commensurate income for their produce. It buys palay from the farmers, particularly during the peak of the harvest season, to be used in building up the buffer stock.

If local production falls short of demand, NFA imports the staple to fill the gap and maintain the desired level of inventory. The NFA draws from the stock for its distribution into the market whenever need arises.

The NFA has been ensuring to government-guaranteed borrowings since the budget given to it by the national government has fallen short of its actual requirement. NFA's loans usually come from government-owned and -controlled commercial banks.

The state-owned trading firm has been criticized for its huge losses, amounting to P33 billion in the last three years.

"This is due to our mandate to buy palay at a higher price to benefit farmers but and sell at a low price to the consumers," Tan explained.

He said to bring down its losses this year, the NFA is asking the DOF to defer the collection of P13 billion in tariffs on the rice importation the same trading firm made in the past years.

Since 2002, the agency has been paying an extra 50 centavos per kilo on its rice importation and this, Tan said, was a heavy burden to the NFA.

"We actually borrow from local banks to pay these duties and because of this, our interest expense reached P2 billion," he said.

Another option to ease the agency's financial burden, Tan said, was for the agency to assign its import rights to private groups.

With international rice price now ranging from $250 to $270 per metric ton, the country's rice imports this year could rise P13- P20 billion, given the projected rice production shortfall of not less than 1.4 million metric tons.

Tan said there was also a move to trim the NFA bureaucracy by eliminating 744 work functions to reduce operating expenditures and personnel salaries now amounting to P1.6-billion.

BSP approves initiative to improve lending to small farmers

By Doris C. Dorias

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) approved a fresh initiative to improve lending to small farmers in the countryside.

The BSP on Friday announced that its policy-making Monetary Board had approved the classification of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (RBAP-MABS) as a microfinance loan.

In the past, small farms to farmers or micro-agri loans were considered agricultural credit, that requiring traditional collateral and stringent documentary requirements.

"These conditions have become the major barrier for small farmers seeking access to much-needed financial services to increase their economic activity," the BSP said in a statement.

With the new classification, the loans will now enjoy the benefits of microfinance such as the acceptance of cash collateral, cash flow and character-based lending in lieu of traditional collateral, simplified loan application, and simpler documentary requirements.

RBAP-MABS, a technical assistance service to over 250 banking units with microfinance operations, has patterned the micro-agri loan product after the typical microenterprise loan utilizing the same methodology and upholding the same standards and best practices.

The BSP said this approval indicated its "sustained responsiveness to the development of the microfinance sector as well as the needs of the small farmers in rural areas."

Certain conditions, however, were set for micro-agri loans to be classified as microfinance loans:

- The prospective client must have other sources of income aside from the agricultural activity sufficient for the periodic payment of loans.
- The criteria/characteristics of a microfinance loan as provided in the existing regulations must be present; and
- The micro-agri loan must be in the bank's microfinance manual as one of the products offered and must have a sub-centered ledger.

Microfinance, which has been typically linked to financial services for livelihood activities or microenterprise lending, has been proven crucial for a viable undertaking.

The loans are small, from a low of P2,000 to P5,000, to a maximum of P500,000. The likelihood of default of the entire loan balance is great when an amortization payment is missed. However, the delinquency rate of microfinancing in the Philippines is very low at 2 to 5 percent.

"The move by the BSP has shown clear, when applied appropriately, this technology would be extended to other types of products and services," the BSP said.

Technical ...

From page B-1

On a weekly basis, the market fell 40.82 points or 1.86 percent, it closed Friday at 2,188.24.

"The index failed in its attempt to breach the 2,272 mark and looks to be entering a consolidation mode," AB Capital said.

On the positive side, however, investors are cheering on the bill implementation of the EVAT Law next week as peak prices higher.

"When the dust settles, the only major catalyst for the market will be the full implementation of the expanded value-added tax law by July 1," the stock brokerage firm said. "This will shift the market's attention away from the rosy sentiment and bring investors back from the sidelines."

Despite the market's recent weakness, many are still optimistic about 2006's prospects because of hope for an end to the government's fiscal woes, a return in oil prices and strong foreign demand for Philippine stocks," AB Capital said.

Stocks to watch this week include banking issues, especially after the central bank revealed that the industry's loan portfolio ratio showing signs of life to extend this end of 2005. Beatrix L. Aaron

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MESSAGES

A Tradition of Excellence Lives On

At the dawn, the 20th century, the UP College of Medicine (UPCM) was created to address the health and medical needs of the emerging Philippine nation. Converted as the Philippine Medical School in 1905, its inception and evolution as a national institution are the quest for Philippine medical autonomous centered on the precepts of science, culture and empathy, built on a foundation of selfless dedication to the advancement of the Filipino people, thus, transforming its distinction as the universal center for medical learning.

The UP College of Medicine envisions a community of scholars competent and socially responsible, possessed of moral, ethical, and spiritual rigor, and committed to the development of the Philippine society through excellence and leadership in community-oriented medical education, research, and service. In keeping with its vision and mission, the UPCM holds the Grand Scientific Symposium (GSS) yearly. A great tradition that over-the, it is a venue for the college to bring together its experts - the best scholars, researchers and practitioners in various medical specialties and disciplines - to present a grand convention or total national rate. The Grand Scientific Symposium was conceived by former UPCM Dean and UP Manila Chancellor Dr. Alfredo T. Ramos to affirm the UPCM mission. Through the pioneering efforts of the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PIM) and Dr. Francisco H. Dans and the Executive Development Office (EDO) under Dr. Gerardo A. Alfiler (now Director of the Philippine General Hospital), the Grand Scientific Symposium was born. On January 23, 1996, the faculty, alumni and the clinical departments of the college came together in a 3-day multidisciplinary scientific convention with general medical practitioners and specialists from all parts of the country. The unprecedented success of the first Symposium led to its institutionalization as an annual event.

To further boost the commitment of the UPCM to promote the transfer of medical knowledge and technology to group outside of Metro Manila, former UPCM Dean Amelia B. Fernandez decided to hold the GSS at other parts of the country with former alumni based in the regions at its helm. Since then, the GSS has been an annual event alternating between Manila and a remote region in the country with an active core of UPCM and PGH alumni. The symposium have been used to fund the various projects of the UPCM and the various regional chapter heads.

The year 2005 marks the centennial of the College of Medicine. For one hundred years now, the UP College of Medicine has remained steadfast in upholding its role in nation-building through excellence and leadership in medical education, research and service. It honors the former of healing, humanity and heroism. Healing represents UPCM's dedication and commitment to protect and promote the health of the Filipino people. Humanism reveals the sacrifices of the heart in the service of the underserved. Humanity stems from the UPCM mission that imparts to graduates to serve well the individuals they seek to heal. The 10th Grand Scientific Symposium on January 23-25, 2006 at the Manila Hotel, is thus a special occasion for the UPCM. Dubbed as the Centennial Grand Scientific Symposium, it caps the yearlong celebration that pays tribute to UPCM's tradition of commitment, dedication, service, passion and competence. It bears the theme "Emergencies and Disasters: Ready for the 21st Century Primary Health Care Provider." As three hours of major calamities and disasters that unexpectedly strike, the theme is very timely as multidisciplinary approach to emergencies and disasters and be of service to our country.

Emergencies and Disasters:
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For inquiries, call the Centennial Grand Scientific Symposium Secretariat at (632) 526-0993. Visit the website at http://centennial.up.gov.org

People, Events & Products

Editor Aries Rufino

Nestlé, Powerbooks bring life to Narnia

(HANDICAPPED MINISTRY, host-restored trees, a half-man, half-goat creature with an umbrella, a curious, a mean looking witch dressed in white and riding in a sleigh. These are just some of the characters, things and creatures that greeted individuals from enough to curious enough to step inside the giant wardrobe Jan. 7 and 8 in North Edsa Kinder and Boardbooks transformed the Glorietta Activity Center into the mythical land of Narnia, the setting of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe," the classic fable written by CS Lewis which was turned into a major motion picture now showing in theaters nationwide. In fact, it just hit the leftover holiday destinations and the regular hustle and bustle of a shopping mall on a weekend, the crowd knew they might actually belong in the land where "It is always winter but never Christmas."

The young and the young at heart came in droves—more than 20,000 of them to be more exact—during the two-day event. As early as 10 a.m., "Festival of Lights" "Daughters of Eve" and "Sons" were tagging their parents to the different booths, nooks and corners which featured activities such as an "Enchanted with the White Witch", where kids had their pictures taken with a live White Witch; a Narnian Face Painter's filling, where kids had their faces painted to be transformed into a Beaver, Centaur or their choice; a Mystic Archery and Castle, where kids showed their talents in dressing and solving their favorite Narnia theme with Edsa and the Narnia Snowball Dive center, where kids use goodies by doing into a specified game cubic balls.

There was also the Narnia storytelling center and the Narnia bulletin by Powerbooks, where different selections of the Narnia books were showcased. And at the center of the virtual Narnia is even bustling landmark to all Narnia lines, a lamppost, flanked by a mysterious and one of the most beloved characters in the book, Mr. Tumnus, the half-goat, Mr. Tumnus, the faun. The costumes magically came to life every time kids shout the magic word, "Edsa!"

The kids and their parents didn't seem to mind the long queues for the different activities as they were entertained with a variety show on stage. Hosted by television personalities Dean Arellano and Jay Villanta, the show featured games, a singing performance, a magic show and a spectacular staging of excerpts from "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe" by renowned theater group Trumpets.

Aside from the activities, the kids who came to the two-day event also can't seem to get enough of the free Edsa Branch, the delicious chocolate breakfast served from Nestlé. Edsa Branch is made from energy-giving cocoa and is packed with the vitamins, minerals and minerals. No wonder the kids in the event didn't seem to run out of steam as they dash from one booth to the next and to their participation in all the activities.

With all On Sat, excitement and magic, the two-day festival not only delightfully, in event to remember. Thanks to Edsa Branch and Powerbooks for bringing the magic of world of Narnia to life!

We can still get free limited-edition patented Chronicles of Narnia collectible pictures such as coded to bring Chronicles of Narnia frames or coins something magical when done for every purchase of large or medium packs of Edsa Branch, Bonus Stix, Bites Cereal, Cookie Crisp, Trio and Coco Flakes in leading stores and supermarkets.

QUAKER OATHEAL SMART HEART CHALLENGE

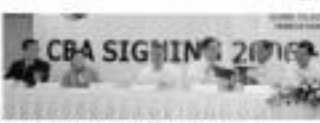
90 employees of diversified participated in the challenge. And Bob Bradan Oatmeal for breakfast for a period of 30 days. "72% of Benchmarked" Social Development Manager Rosemarie Sison, the winners. Did you know: Wellness Inspector. 1st prize winner: Jennie Lim, business development manager, Wheaton Inc.; 2nd the 3rd: consultant manager, Philippine Investment.

HONDA'S FINEST TECHNICIANS

To achieve total customer satisfaction, Honda Cars Philippines Inc (HCPI) recently held the fifth Annual National Technician Contest and Service Advisor's Contest to technical skills contest among Honda service technicians and advisors. This contest is meant to help to continuously upgrade the technicians' skills, especially on new repair techniques, as well as promote customer confidence on Honda's maintenance tasks. This year's technician category winners were Rolando Mendoza (champion) from Honda Cars Pasig, Cris Paz (1st runner-up) from Honda Cars Manila, and Ronie Pacheco (2nd runner-up) of Honda Cars Cagayan de Oro. Cando D. Pedro, HCPI AVP for marketing service, said the event encourages Honda technicians to do

MICROTEX NAMED NO. 1 AUTOMOTIVE CLEANING CLOTH BRAND

Microtex was awarded as the No. 1 Automotive Cleaning Cloth Brand and honored for the recently concluded 2005 National Shoppers' Choice Annual Awards held at Crown Plaza Ortigas. Microtex bested Cactus Kleen Corporation, Kimberly-Clark Philippines, Shurtex Yap, president and CEO Kimberly Cactus International Corporation, exclusive distributor of Microtex cleaning cloths. Dr. Gonzalo Puyat, president of the 2000 Inc. Board, Association of Innovators and Communicators, and Jose Pimentel, Rt. Filipinas Systems 2000. The National Shoppers' Choice Awards is an annual award which aims to give recognition to the most outstanding companies and brands in the Philippines. Microtex is the only cleaning cloth brand that uses microfiber technology.



ELCEE TELECOM, CTWU-PPW SIGN 2006 CBA

Elcee Telecom Inc. and its rank-and-file union, Elcee Telecom Workers Union-Philippine Transport and General Workers Organization (ETWU-PPW), have formally signed the 2006 to 2010 collective bargaining agreement Jan. 13, making the agreement now Elcee's current and third consecutive effort.

Leonardo L. Abaya, in behalf of the management team of Elcee, PPW president Isidro P. Galicia Jr. on behalf of the union, with Elcee vice president Augusto Jose de Ayala II and Solomon Cordero Jr. and Melchior Rizal Dayrit, Executive Director Reynaldo B. Daquila witnessing the event.

Elcee is an Assembly Circle industrial electronics subsidiary. Elcee's union officers are Jose Alcantara, president; Ronald King, Chief Abaya, Glenn Tria, PPW national vice president Mike Mendoza, CTWU vice president Angelito Olarga and CTWU secretary Salvador Lopez.

New GMA Kapuso Foundation appointment

GMA KAPUSO FOUNDATION recently welcomed its newest member, director Manuel "Bimbo" B. Dela Rosa Jr.

A gifted training facilitator, Bimbo has spent 23 years in the business of sales as a salesperson-trainer and was an advertiser for 14 years in several well-respected learning institutions.

His zeal for learning and teaching led to more individuals who are genuinely interested in honing and serving others places him in an environment where his passion would be best pursued.

Dela Rosa graduated with a degree in Journalism, Ateneo de Manila University. He took his Masters degree in Literature from the same institution, while he earned his Bachelor of Theology and Philosophy as well.

He has also taught at Ateneo de Davao University, Ateneo de Naga University, Xavier School (Nazareth), Ateneo de Cagayan, Xavier School (Cagayan De Oro City) and Ateneo High School (ex-Zamboanga, Jesuit-run) and Manila).

GMA Kapuso Foundation has quietly established itself as a leading institution that feeds the need of the less fortunate and the wounding found in the country that cannot afford a decent medical aid for their illnesses.

Banana Leaf partners with top financial institutions

FRIDAY AND LOVE, habitues of banana leaf, Manila's premium dining restaurant, are in for a treat with its recent partnership with BDBC, Citibank, and American Express.

All BDBC credit cardholders, called Mabuhay Miles Elite are entitled to a special 10-percent discount on their total bill for every single receipt, dine-in purchases. They may also avail of the privilege of the free valet parking at Bel Grist, for an even easier dining experience.

Citibank cardholders may also avail themselves of a free order of dessert of their choice for a minimum single-receipt, dine-in purchase of P500. Mabuhay Miles Visa cardholders, on the other hand, are entitled to the "Triple the Miles Points."

Cardholders of Citibank Gold and Platinum, American Express, and Platinum Plus holders of Metro Metrobanco, are also in for a lot of special treats each time they visit one of the Banana Leaf branches. Gold cardholders of Citibank cardholders get a 10-percent discount, while Amex cardholders get a 15-percent discount.

Banana Leaf has also partnered with the Oakwood Premium Residences, wherein guests are entitled to special perks like 15 percent off on meals, 10 percent off on charge to guestrooms, and free Banana Leaf Delivered VIP Card where they dine at Banana Leaf.

Chuck van Stratan, Leaf's resident Chef de Cuisine, is known for his innovative and delicious menu, which features a wide array of Filipino dishes with a modern twist. Van Stratan is also known for his Filipino-Spanish fusion cuisine, which he has been serving at Banana Leaf since its opening.

'Appreciating Nyonya Cuisine'

CHEFS TULAMPIS MORE MOLE AMPLIDIA Peranakan Food Festival Chefs Lucas Lim (Cantonese) and Jacky Wee (Nyonya) "Appreciating Nyonya Cuisine" will host welcomed

People, Events & Products

Lira Arin Espinosa

Globe G-Cash, PFCCO tie up

THE WORLD'S FIRST CASHLESS and cashless mobile commerce service, Globe G-Cash, strengthens its thrust as an enabler of economic empowerment by partnering with the Philippine Federation of Credit Cooperatives (PFCCO). This tie-up will allow mobile payment and disbursement of loans from the members cooperatives. The partnership is also seen to complement other strategic linkages established by G-Cash which focus on micro-finance and livelihood projects.

The PFCCO has 900 primary cooperatives and 6 major league associations, with a total base of over 1,000,000 individual members. This is why Globe chairman and chief executive officer Gerardo C. Ablaza Jr. said the alliance is a natural fit.

G-Cash, which is to bring economic technology to the grassroots level and use it as means to promote alleviation and livelihood enhancement," says G-Kampo president Jose Mendoza. "The two known and best practices from our earlier partnerships can also be applied to our alliance with the PFCCO, enabling us to bring improved micro-finance services to the countryside."

In addition, the tie-ups have also been initiated with Globe AutoSmartMAX and TM for the new Touch Mobile, which are also being eyed as possible enablers of livelihood programs and viable business models. TM, on the other hand, is seen as a suitable vehicle for bringing mobile communications technology to grassroots consumers because of its affordable rates and specific services tailored for the mass market.

PFCCO general manager Jose Bonjoc adds: "This partnership can serve as an effective livelihood program, since the PFCCO counts Globe AutoSmartMAX unit dealerships and G-Cash cash-in/cash-out centers among its members. It also expands the reach of Globe's top-up/reload outlets even in remote areas. More than 400 of our member cooperatives are based in Mindanao, where a cost efficient and convenient means of loan collection and disbursement would be of great help to developing microenterprises."

COOPFINLINK SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH VECAS OF VIETNAM

The Council of Engineering Consultants of the Philippines (Coecpil) and the Vietnam Engineering Consultant Association (Vecas) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing another specialized agreement to develop and promote the Philippines as the engineering and consultancy professional in Vietnam and the Philippines thereby facilitating investments between the two countries. The memorandum was witnessed by the spirit of exchange between visiting partners engineering organizations. The document is a testament of the growing professionalism and a source of mutual improvement.

Shown signing the agreement are (from left) Coecpil Executive P. Cortes, president of Coecpil and chairman of Gil Santos & Associates Inc. and Nguyen Canh Chat, chair of Vecas. Witnessing the historic signing are (standing from left): Dr. Ngoc Thanh, deputy director, Ministry of Construction; Le Doan Phach, consultant; Le Bo Son, chief of HCMC Electric Power Company; Le Chi Hieu, member of Architects Association; Nguyen Dinh Tinh, manager, Transport Engineering Design Inc (Tedi); Tho Hong, economic expert, international relations secretary and Nguyen Viet Nguyen, vice-director of Construction Development and Training Center, Vecas.

Convergys receives Frost & Sullivan 2005 Award

FROST & SULLIVAN, A GLOBAL LEADER in growth consulting, has announced that Convergys Corp. (NYSE: CVG) is the recipient of its 2005 Award for Competitive Strategy Leadership in Omnibus Billing for Communications.

Frost & Sullivan presents the award each year to a company whose strategy has yielded significant gains in market share during a specific period. In determining the award, Frost & Sullivan conducted extensive research on OSS and Billing software markets in the Communications and Utilities industries, gathering data from leading software vendors, service integrators, industry analysts.

Convergys was chosen because it combined prudent and controlling spending positioned it for growth during the economic recovery of 2003. During the downturn, the company invested in next generation software via acquisition and in-house development of the Rapidly Business Support System (BSS) software, Infinys. Further, the company created Professional Services offerings in leverage its unique and relevant experience in both billing and customer care. When the economy recovered, providers were able to increase capital expenditures on software and Frost and Sullivan believes, which helped it gain more Convergys users promptly.

"We saw increased demand for software applications that effectively support converged services such as video, data, and wireless ("quadruple play"), and customer centricity, which Convergys excelled. It is the only BSS product on the market that offers true convergence," said Lizzy Schwartz, executive vice president of operations for Convergys' information management group. "Infinys' component architecture is also appealing to providers who want to deploy new capabilities easily at a time through best-of-breed, packaged software rather than replacing their entire systems all at once with custom, end-to-end solutions. The creation of our Professional Services Consulting organization enabled us to gain new business while growing revenues with existing clients. Together, our packaged and consulting capabilities have proven to be a powerful combination in the marketplace."

"Convergys' 2004 software license and other revenues totaled $75.1 Million, a 7% percent growth over 2003, demonstrating its effective alignment with current market changes," said Frost and Sullivan analyst Ashwin Jain. "Many other vendors in this market including Amdocs, CSG Systems, IBM Intermin, Portal Software and Sigma have in recent times launched their own next generation products. But the only BSS product on the market that offers true convergence," said Lizzy Schwartz, executive vice president of operations for Convergys' information management group. "Infinys' component architecture is also appealing to providers who want to deploy new capabilities easily at a time through best-of-breed, packaged software rather than replacing their entire systems all at once with custom, end-to-end solutions. The creation of our Professional Services Consulting organization enabled us to gain new business while growing revenues with existing clients. Together, our packaged and consulting capabilities have proven to be a powerful combination in the marketplace."

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PHILIPPINES PLACES 3RD IN INT'L DANCESPORT COMPETITION

The Philippines participated in the 22nd International Society of Teachers of Dance (ISTD) Top Medalist Pro-Am Competition held at Swiss 23 in Hong Kong. Mr. Julien Antonio of Trade and Exhibition Center, Pasig city. This was an open international dancesport competition participated by professional teachers and students coming from Hongkong, Macau, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Taiwan, with separate floor for senior and juniors. The Philippines was represented by an international accredited professional teacher, Robert Lizon and his student, Lisa Grace Antonio.

He said, "It's the first time I am not competing in practice floor for a short notice. But overall I got second place in the finals for cha cha and got third place in the finals for east coast swing in the Standard Dance. The Philippines has been steadily gaining recognition in the area of international dancesport competitions, producing world champions, amateur and professional teachers, students, and amateur table, stamina and strength. With the Filipino national flair for artistry and with due consistency and dedication, we can expect the Filipino dancesport competitors can bring home more

achievements in the years of sport. Shown are the Philippine representatives who were in the Hongkong Pro-Am competition. Robert Lizon (standing) and Lisa Grace (shorter).

CLUB FILIPINO INAUGURATES GIMNASIO

Club Filipino's recently inaugurated its new state-of-the-art gymnasium called Gimnasio. Fred photo shows the cutting of the ribbon by the club's president Jacque Robredo da Leva assisted by directors Avila Mercurio, Alfredo Carino, Ramon Calderpetal and Alfonso Dee. Domingo Jose is director Linda Nuno. Second photo shows mayor Rolando de Leon, president Ernesto Rivadeneira Lopez, Paulo Rivera, Pamela De Agra and members and representatives from the suppliers of the gym equipment.

WORLDBEX SERVICES INT'L, AYALA CENTER CEBU MOA SIGNING

Worldbex Services International (WSI) has established its agreement with Ayala Center Cebu, making Worldbex a supporting partner for the WSI recognized International Master Championships on June 13 to 4, at the Ayala Center, Cebu City. Shown during the signing are (seated from left) Worldbex Services Int'l., Assist Professor conducting manager—Ayala Center Cebu; Felix Mapalo, assistant vice president—Ayala Center Cebu; Dr. Felix Pilar (Worldbex Services Int'l.).

HEALTH AND FITNESS EQUALS BEAUTY

Ace Regina Valentino, a TV personality/dancer shares that exercise is one important factor especially for women who wants to stay vital. To many people or avoid gaining more weight, this powerful celebrity student recommends 1 to 4 of Bel Ayala Center, Cebu City. Shown during the signing are (seated from left) Yolanda Healthy as the recognized International Master Championships, stated on June 13 to 4, at Bel Ayala Center, Cebu City. Shown during the signing are (standing from left) Worldbex Services Int'l., Assist Professor conducting manager—Ayala Center Cebu; Felix Mapalo, assistant vice president—Ayala Center Cebu; Dr. Felix Pilar (Worldbex Services Int'l.).

IABC CITES UBC EXEC IN CEO EXCEL AWARD 2005

Executive Per Rudolf, executive vice president and managing director of Universal Robina Corp. (URC), was recently awarded the Communicator's Excellence Organization (CEO) Award for 2005 by the International Association for Business Communication (IABC). Held at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila, the CEO Excel Award for 2005 recognized senior executives who effectively use communication in achieving the organization's strategic objectives and improving profitability. Some of Rudolf's most notable projects in this area are the Universal Robina Sustainability (URSA) awards, a value orientation talent investment operations in all countries regardless of rank; the Idea Grid, a monthly get-together with selected employees in an atmosphere of transparency, camaraderie and honesty; and Pan Asian Business Forum, a value partnership newsletter. IABC, the local chapter of an organization with a network of more than 13,000 business communication professionals across 80 countries, holds this annual award to recognize excellence of the importance of communications business and organizational management. IABC Manila also aims to recognize outstanding communicators whose achievements clearly demonstrate communication's contribution to organizational success.

MELC invites you to look better, feel better, see better

CLEAR VISION IS NECESSARY IN daily living and enjoying life. To wake up each morning without having to grapple for eyeglasses is an indescribable freedom to many. Eliminating the daily hassle of eyewear, not to mention expenditure and more. For millions of people all over the world who have given up with thick eyeglasses, laser vision correction has given them confidence and a new outlook on life. Makati Eye Laser Center offers these and a whole lot more with its customized laser vision correction, a treatment that truly brings a better quality of life.

Makati Eye Laser Center was established in 1999 as the foundation of Refractive Laser Surgery and has the widest experience in laser vision correction in the Philippines. True to its mission of providing the most advanced technology, it has been addressing the need for creating glasses and contact lens with Lasik for Presbyopia is a multi-focal treatment which corrects distance and reading vision simultaneously in a treatment for both eyes. How? Modern UK is a one-laser option to correct reading vision. For years now, many patients above the age of 40, having to wear bifocals or having to bring out reading glasses to see and wear messages, the newspaper, email or a board meeting agenda is now a thing of the past.

Makati Eye Laser Center's state-of-the-art technology and facility which promises relentless and privacy while providing expertise and personal care has given them a reputation for client satisfaction. Cataract surgery is done using the ultra-low phacoemulsification technique. As with all treatments, effort is placed in making the 20 minute procedure a pleasant experience with as much discomfort as possible. The benefit of one's eyes through the different stages of life as well as one's well-being is the foremost concern of the Makati Eye Laser Center.

Clear vision is enjoying the gift of sight throughout life. To make a reservation, consult all other pertinent information, inquiries/full assistance is always rendered with emphasis in contact lenses. Laser Vision Corrections is the answer to the problem of restoring clarity and focus, allowing spontaneous vision. In a fast-paced world with so much to offer, all this clear vision is necessary for even ten years, the Makati Eye Laser Center has helped thousands experience the joy and freedom of clear vision without glasses or contacts. To date, Makati Eye Laser Center never rests to its mission of providing the most advanced technology in the Philippines. With Presbyopic Lasik treatments and Customized, persons over the age of 40 will not need reading glasses or bifocals. With its new Philips Precise, Makati Eye Laser Center invites you to look better, feel better and see better.

Bits & Clips

Festival Supermall January events

THROUGH JAN. 30 UNTIL THE 30th, popular Chinese goods like tea and porcelain wares, cosmetics, good luck charms and the celebrated Chinese Moon Cake will be up for sale at the mall's Carousel Court. From Jan. 23 to Feb. 6, one-kilo of the most popular seafood in Chinese Medical history and nutritious of the known Chinese Mother-in-Law and kitchen will be served in specialty cuisine mall's 2nd floor main entrance and beyond Dad's Avenue. A mall-wide Chinese New Year celebration to hold from Jan. 27 to 29. Booklets will contain Feng Shui tips and containing a listing of items displayed in the mall. Mall will be open until 10 midnight on Jan. 27. The celebration of the celebration will be from Jan. 28 and Jan. 29 around the mall. On the same day, noted Chinese calligrapher Victor Wong will take his at the mall's Fountain Terrace activities. Interested mall patrons regarding the activities can contact Ms. Ma. Victoria Lopez at 635-2000 extension 2405. For the celebration of Chinese Lion Dance on

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PSBank US Dollar TIME DEPOSIT

BUSINESS

Gov't expects billions in savings

By Michelle V. Rarus

THE GOVERNMENT EXPECTS TO GENERATE billions of pesos in savings from debt servicing this year, as the peso strengthens against the US dollar while interest rates are seen to decline further.

In a sensitivity analysis, the Department of Finance said the national government could save P4.289 billion this year for every cent of peso appreciation, and another P5.137 billion for every percentage point decline in interest rates.

Under the government's 2005 fiscal program, it is set to pay P381.7 billion worth of maturing foreign and domestic debt.

The 2006 fiscal program assumed that the average exchange rate would settle at P56.34, and that the benchmark 91-day Treasury bill rate would fetch 8 percent.

Strong inflow of remittances from abroad—money mostly sent by overseas Filipino workers to relatives in the country—has propped up the peso against the dollar.

The peso is hovering at the P52-$1 level since the beginning of the year. On Friday, it closed at P52.90-$1. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said that there is even a possibility that the peso would hit the 52-to-the-dollar level.

Still, cuts have also been dialing due to the high level of market liquidity, which increases demand for government securities, and the reduction in the supply of T-bills and bonds because of the government's dwindling budget deficit.

The finance of the Treasury earlier announced that the government's domestic borrowing program for the first quarter of this year was set at P75 billion, or 47 percent lower than the P142 billion borrowed during the same period of last year.

T-bill rates dropped across all maturities last week, with the 91-day issue breaking the 5-percent mark and falling to 4.663 percent, the lowest since August 2002.

The government had set a budget deficit ceiling of P180 billion last year, but the Treasury said the actual deficit figure would be lower than P160 billion.

The Department of Finance, head agency of the Treasury, will announce the official 2005 budget deficit figure today.

Lack of national pride challenged by youth culture

THERE IS AN APPARENT PERCEPTION that Filipinos prefer everything imported. Not surprising, considering that the country was under foreign rule for more than 400 years. Among this long period, colonial mentality, or the feeling of inferiority to foreigners, was born. However, recent cultural developments say otherwise, with the surprising resurgence of nationalism in the youth sector.

This new wave of nationalism among the youth is seemingly prevalent wherever you look. In music, fashion, movies, and gaming, somehow Pinoy seems to be "in" again. It appears that nothing escapes Pinoy pride, not even internet message boards. A teenager on a popular Pinoy message board proudly posts, "I respect nations! Kahit magsuot na ang tatay ko Filipino pa rin ako!"

This pride is not unjustified. Filipinos everywhere are blazing trails through fields usually dominated by foreign powers. Their results are enough to catch the attention of the stereotypically fast to the fashion to win over The youth.

Take gaming for instance. Traversing a field dominated by technologically advanced countries, home Entertainment produced Sam: A Land Escaped, a game that is not only Pinoy made but is proudly Pinoy themed. Gamers were all excited with Aetos, and supportive of the fledgling endeavor. The ever-calling year-round wars, "Ragnarok" the Philippine Gaming Industry, buy the original game, was created".

The gaming industry is not the only field being revolutionized by nationalism. The Philippines music scene, which has, for the past few years been inundated with foreign acts to once more brimming with local talent. Songs that speak of Philippine pride, like Rainbow's Sinta, became the anthem of the identity seeking youth.

Even Philippine cinema is experiencing a renaissance. The rise of independent filmmaking has sparked renewed interest in local movies, with the youth more tempted to cinema houses to watch, and take pride in these local productions.

Sadly, this strong resurgence of nationalism seems to be limited to the youth. Among other groups, a preference for foreign goods and products is still prevalent. A lot of the box office hits are still the foreign movies. In upscale cinema houses, people patronize only the genre despite the long lines, while not a few farmers showing local movies remain half-full.

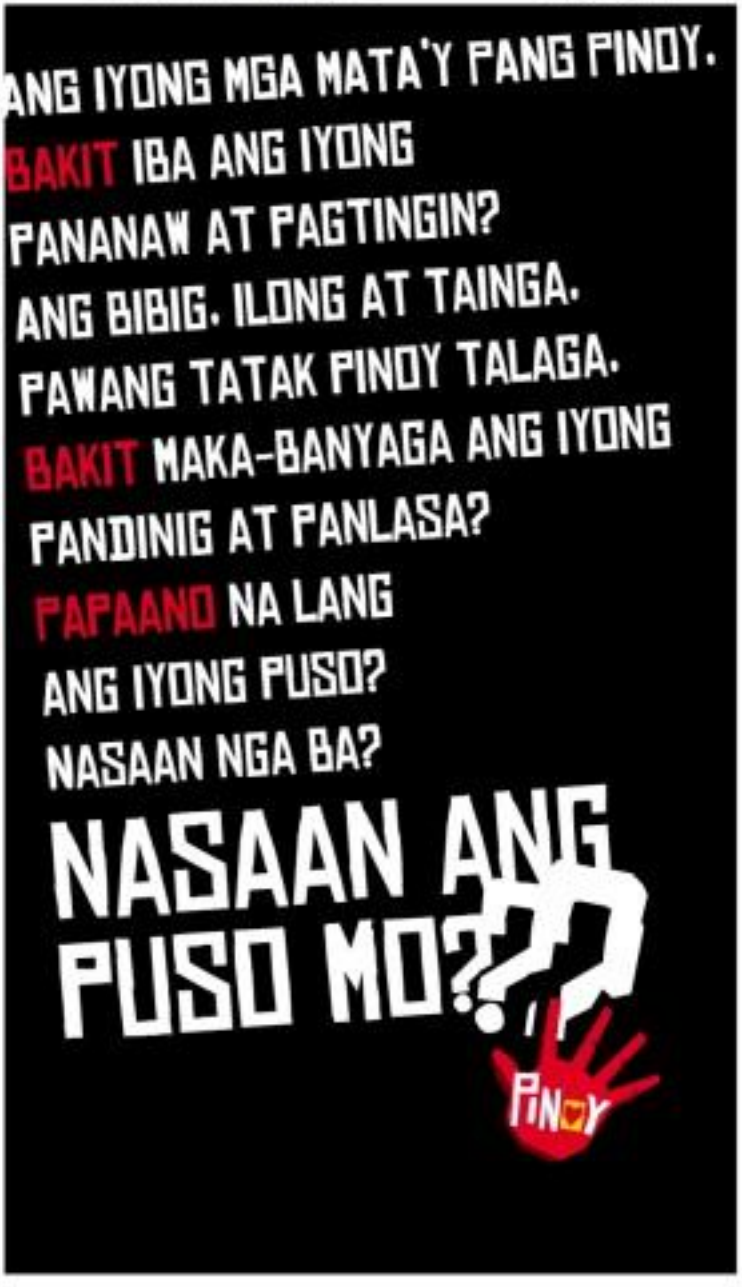
Many shoppers prefer big name foreign brands clothes, shelling out the hefty sales to get a chance to purchase their dream imported brand clothes while the prices are down. Puzzling really, since despite the lowered prices, most are still more expensive than reputable priced items from quality local brands.

PX Goods stores still make a killing, selling everything from canned goods to toilet paper. The thought that local products could be better doesn't usually occur to the shoppers.

This preference can't easily be justified with sound reasoning. But one explanation makes sense. Colonial mentality. An age-old way of thinking instilled to Filipinos since the Spanish ages, colonial mentality regards foreign ways as better and should be mimicked. But what's really better for Filipinos? Imported goods or products made with them specifically in mind?

Perhaps the Filipino youth know something older people don't. Something that compels them to champion what they believe, and take pride in. Something about how nationalism can raise an economy, grow. And something about how colonial mentality can kill it.

It's never too late for an old dog to learn new tricks. And maybe this time, the old dogs should learn from the young.



BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor Pharyn Quimpo-Rupisan

MINA Aguas in her Spanish-style home

Moving further up

By Pharyn Quimpo-Rupisan

HER FACE ALWAYS BEAMS into a wide smile. Her personality is so "un-Citibank." Still was how the bank was 10 years ago when it was dominated by males in grey and navy blue suits.

But Citibank N.A.'s first female country manager for Global Consumer Bank Mina S. Aguas brought more than just her smile and woman power to the bank.

She fought and won battles for the country that in the end showed, despite her nervousness, that her heart is in the right place.

Postmodernidades visited her in her sprawling Spanish-style home in the southern part of Manila. As soon as she saw us, she broke into a wide smile and spoke her unmistakable welcome.

Dressed in jeans, white blouse and big white pearl necklace and earrings, she gives a personal tour of her villa-like abode, regaling us with little stories about the antique furnishings and collectibles from all over the world that decorate the place.

The house looks small and unassuming from the street, but it stands on 2,500 square meters of rolling terrain.

The house sits over five different parties without one group seeing or disturbing the other.

She says she is real about leaving her home. She knows she will not enjoy this much space when she moves to an apartment in New York but she vows to visit the Philippines more every quarter.

Mina has just accepted a Citibank job in the United States as head of Corporate Center Business Compliance, a global position. She will be the first to occupy the post—an area that is the focus of Citibank chair Sanford Weill. Her job is to ensure that all aspects of the bank's operations are in compliance with government and bank rules.

Critics have commented that she is being kicked upstairs but it's just talk. Mina has headed the Philippine operations for almost six years—almost twice the usual three years

BOOMING B2-3

Beyond cooperation

WHEN A GROUP OF SOLDIERS YOUNG themselves locked away in a German prison camp during World War II, they easily could have waited out the end of the war there. Or, they might have made a few casual attempts to flee one or two people.

At one such camp, however, the goals were much bigger. Those prisoners organized themselves around the collective goal of helping 250 soldiers in one night. Their story became the basis for the 1963 movie, "The Great Escape."

Imagine the teamwork required to pull off such an ambitious goal. Groups of prisoners had to engineer and dig tunnels, build supports from wooden sites, dispose of dirt, create bellows to pump air into the tunnels, and light the tunnels.

According to one list, the supplies included 9,000 cubic feet of dirt, 1,370 blankets, 1,000 bunkbeds, 52 long tables, 1,218 knives, 30 shovels, 600 feet of rope and 1,000 feet of electric wire.

In addition to building materials for the tunnels, each escapee needed navy-civilian clothes, German papers, identity cards, maps, home-made compasses and emergency rations.

Everyone had a job, from cutlets to pick-pockets to lawyers. There were even many that specialized in distracting the German officers.

"It demanded the concentrated devotion and vigilance of more than 600 men... every single one of them, every minute, every hour, every day and every night for more than one year," John Stamps, who directed the movie account, once said. "Never has the human capacity been tested to such incredible lengths or shown such determination and such courage."

To pull off such an elaborate mission, the soldiers moved beyond cooperation and into collaboration. Success, there's a difference between cooperation and collaboration.

Cooperation is working together optionally. Everybody sits down, and they're quite agreeable. Collaboration is working together aggressively, and there's a world of difference between those two.

There are many changes needed to become a collaborative type of a player.

1. Perception. You need to see sometimes different-

ly. So you need to see them as collaborators, not as competitors.

2. Attitude. As a team player, you need to be supportive, see suggestions, if sometimes, become if you trust others, you'll treat them differently—you'll treat them better.

3. Focus. A collaborative type of team player or cooperative on the issue, not himself or herself. Focus on the future and is right. "If we progress in any field in a relay race and not a single event," to the locusts different.

4. Results. You begin to create victories through such spirit-team.

One is no result of a number is produce greatness. In fact, nothing can be accomplished in a great way without help. You have to learn to collaborate. You have to learn to come together.

When you're developing a team that collaborates, it begins to be suggestions, not just approvable. And it begins to accomplish a vision that more cooperation never would allow.

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email to al maxwell@magsy.ph or call 843-1234/632-01 ext. 2000. See also MAXWELL ON 9 MAY (Smart) to get daily 360 leadership insights from John Maxwell. Call Direct)

MWA (second from right) with some of the members of her senior management team. (From left) Aileen Limsiaca, Cecille Fonacier and Bonjie Olbes.

Moving further...

From page B1-4

that top officials may to a post.

In her strength as a Filipino expatriate, Nina has to create a template to outline what she has to do.

"It's a career function that is not yet defined. I have to develop the mandate and the charter for it," she says.

After a tour of the house which took about half an hour, we sit for breakfast of longganisa and steamed beef. Her breaks into a hearty laugh as she reminds me of poor motherhood days, which cares were lost left in adults.

See that Nina has to cares. Her position in Citibank carries responsibilities enough for 10 lifetimes.

But her secret lies in two words, "hyper life."

"Personally, I like to have fun. This is something that is never missing with me. Even when deadlines are tight and the pressure is on, I take time out to laugh and enjoy the little things in life," she said in a previous interview in the Philippines.

And Nina knows how to make herself laugh even in the most stressful situations.

One time, the country managers were asked to make reports to Citibank's top boss in Asia. Asterisks she looked and felt awkward. A senior colleague asked why she was so relaxed.

Nina laughingly whispered, "I just think that like you and me, all of them go to the bathroom too!"

Indeed, the outfits and the jewelry of the otherwise lady will be missed in the halls of Citibank in Ayala Avenue City in Lilac.

Nina changed many things in Citibank and achieved great strides in representing the Philippine operations in the American conglomerate, that not have the country on to plan by far.

"One of the best compliments I received when I said I was leaving was—Who's going to speak for the Philippines now?" she says.

Nina is poor as first female head of Citibank in the Philippines not not all pomp and pageantry.

When she accepted the top post in Citibank in Manila, tower Latin American, she did so with the intent to help the Philippines, in particular, her country more jobs.

Nina's dedication could be achieved by **encouraging the funds to come more in the Philippines.**

But it was not an easy task to do in a company which had its eyes on Russia, China and India.

But efforts were made harder by the fact that Citigroup had been exhibiting most of its foreign acquisitions and was not in a spending mode. This did not deter the feisty Nina.

For four years, "I talked to whomever will listen" about Citibank acquiring a local savings bank in the Philippines.

The law limits the branch network of foreign banks to only nine. However, they can own savings banks.

"How can you compete against local banks which have hundreds?" Nina remembers.

As for years, she lobbied for the purchase of a savings bank—a strategy adopted by other foreign banks to expand their market.

By some stroke of luck, she was finally given the nod to buy one. Life then became more dynamic than ever for Nina. "It was a matter of fire," she says to describe the move to acquire Equitable Savings Bank.

There were times she regretted her move. But she plodded on.

It took almost a year for the acquisition to be finalized with Citibank Savings. The experience more than anything showed how capable Filipinos are, Nina says.

When everything was signed, Nina says: "It was a moment to experience. Some guys from New Jersey said if they could only look in the eyes, cry and scream to release emotions..."

While still pushing for the acquisition of a savings bank, Nina also prepared that Citibank go after the consumer business. "Nobody wanted to believe it," she says.

But Nina showed the numbers... 50 percent of the operations in a country like the Philippines, half of those come from the United States, and 50 percent of the remittances that come here the US come from California.

Citibank first opened a remittance center in San Francisco and so for it is pressing to be quite a good business for the bank.

On top of those, she was able to push for the opening of a call center—Citicorp Services—for Citibank in Manila. Citicorp was set up in 2004 to provide business process outsourcing, call center and IT-related services to customers Citibank entities around the globe.

When the acquisition of Equitable Savings was nearing its final stages, Nina got an offer for the global position. She told the bosses she could not think of it because there were still loose ends to be tied.

That was September 2005. Come the next three months, she was being founded for a decision.

As it will begin in her life, Nina, who financially timed, prayed over the decision and consulted her family, especially her husband, Mario, a former senator in 1987-92. He told her it was only the time says. The five children were easy as for her later agree to the change.

Nina and Mel's brother is in the midst of being pushed. When we interviewed her, the parties were still in the name of the "Nina" turn had tags—so much those they will be brought in New York.

She is excited but not newly announced about her new post.

Nina is not one to plan her life too many obstacles. But she is certainly where most of her career has—she joined Citibank when she was in her late 20s, came 24 years ago.

She put her husband's career and her family ahead of her own. Yet she still succeeded in her career and continues to shatter glass

Manage your personal risks

By Reynaldo A. de Dios
Contributor

WITH THE ADVENT OF A NEW YEAR, it will be a wise move for the individual with responsibilities to utilize the concepts of personal risk management on the subject of one's accumulated assets and future (especially children).

This should be done on an annual basis as an unexpected serious illness or sudden death will prove prejudicial to the best interests of the family and beneficiaries.

The first step to managing personal risks is to undertake a detailed inventory of one's assets and liabilities through which one can ascertain with reasonable accuracy the values of each.

What one discovers that an individual will most probably enjoy assurance in general by either himself or his beneficiaries in event of untimely death.

Drawing a one is also an exposure to risks which time can be minimized by an insurer. However, it is not possible to remove the safety or liquidity of investments as it depends on a multitude of factors beyond one's control.

There's a saying that good health is better than wealth. This can only be achieved by controlling one's life style and following a regime of medication in all types of ailments. This reflects the application of risk control and avoidance although if one is ill treated by a sudden dreaded disease then the costs of hospitalization and medical treatment would be a great financial burden.

To mitigate this risk, one should consider purchasing medical insurance from a reputable HMO plus a special hazardous policy to cover against medical expenses in the event a dread disease like cancer should envelop the body coup up.

The risks involved in sudden death can be cushioned by a well-designed life insurance program in consultation with a career life insurance agent to ensure adequacy of the sum insured, the careful selection of the beneficiaries and whether the designation is revocable or irrevocable, the latter having a tax-free benefit but depriving the insured the right to change the beneficiaries.

Sudden death is a risk that will no doubt be the cause of an individual's untimely if there is no will in place. Thus the preparation of an estate plan is a prudent and often overlooked step by the individual. In this case, one should seek professional assistance to develop an estate plan that will meet his objectives.

Living too long is also a risk as one may possess a build up of funds that will unravel due to high costs of hospitalization, medicines, doctors' fees, nursing and caregivers' services in one's old age.

Finally, an individual should be kind and charitable to the less fortunate. Moreover, business organizations should include Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in their mission statements. The rewards are of intangible value and are a fitting end to good personal risk management. (The author is a CPA & Insurance Management Consultant)

THE FIRST step in managing personal risks is to undertake a detailed inventory of one's assets and liabilities.

Microtel to build in Bora

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMERICAN LEADING ECONOMY budget hotel chain, Microtel, is building its first resort-styled branch in the Philippines beach capital of the Philippine-Boracay Island. Microtel is planning to open the 90-room, three-level hotel in Boracay by October this year which will have a full-service restaurant and swimming pool, according to Jose Mari del Rosario, CEO/president of Microtel Inns & Suites (Philippines) Inc.

Microtel Boracay is a necessity for the Atlanta-based hotel chain that specializes in affordable, well-maintained lodging facilities in third's domestic and inward countries including the Philippines.

Del Rosario said that he was able to convince Microtel to agree to a few changes in the design of Microtel Boracay to blend in its resort setting because of the massive potential of the beach paradise that has attracted some of the world leading hotel operators such as the Shangri-La group ($75 million).

"We feel that Boracay will continue to be the prime tourist attraction of the Philippines with visitors pouring not only in the summer months but all year round," says del Rosario in an interview. "We think there are still not enough rooms or enough flights to accommodate all the tourists wanting to go to Boracay."

Although the costs of building a room in an island resort was more expensive than the standard cost of Microtel inns in Baguio, Eagle Ridge (Cavite), Mactan-Cebu Lapu-Lapu (Cebu), and Iloilo, Tomas Morato in Del Rosario says that this was till worth it considering the projected returns from the project.

Rates for the pool and restaurant, Microtel Boracay will offer the 90 rooms proposed, as the other Microtel hotels—those rooms at value rates—that have made it a hit among traveling businessmen. Del Rosario says Microtel boasts of having quiet and fresh smelling rooms with a bed that meets the specifications of the prominent Chiropractic Association.

"Our clients say about how are rooms small or good and how our bed feels so comfortable," del Rosario says. But Ann Maria Hernandez del Pilar, corporate secretary of Microtel Boracay, says Microtel "Boracay would target a different clientele, mostly families and couples on vacation. "Our property will stand out not only because of the quality and reliability of our rooms and services but the presence of our location which is very private," said del Pilar. Del Pilar is a **member of the Fernandez del Pilar** group which has a 45 percent stake in Diamond Beach Hotel Corp. which owns the Diamond Beach Resort. The other investors in the franchise are the Pizarras group (35 percent) which owns the Microtel franchise in the country and Javier Alvarez Investment Inc. (20 percent) which owns the Diamond Beach Hotel and Resort in Boracay's Caribbean-type white sandy beach. Microtel is the newest franchise in the country to attract their tourist revenues to boost the economy.

Computerization alone is not the solution

I OFTEN GET TOLD THAT WHEN THE IT community should do something about the computerization of the election system. There are even those who suggest a grand conspiracy, saying that the current Automated Election Law (Republic Automation contract was done to facilitate election fraud in a manual system.

But we who patronized the Supreme Court to stop the Mega Pacific-Smartmatic contract—I'm one of them—disagree that computerization alone would not prevent election fraud.

Most of us in the IT industry believe that computerization will only help make the election count faster and more accurate. But it won't do much to prevent fraud. Some of the dirty tricks employed in manual elections are also applicable in computerized elections.

If the computerized counting will be done by the same dishonest people, fraud will still happen.

Before the 2004 election, wholesale dagdag bawas was said to have happened in Muslim Mindanao through the introduction of fraudulent precinct election returns in the minute counting of provincial certificates of canvass.

To stop fraud, computerization is not the solution. There should be a process of post election audit where election fraud is investigated and punished. Fraud should not be done or part of an election process.

Whether the winners would be declared or not the issue. Election cheating is a criminal offense against our nation and our people and should be investigated as such. Then and only then will we get rid of election fraud.

Fraud cheating by changing the numbers at the precinct level is only **with** unless there are no opposition observers. In recent years, wholesale cheating was done by changing the precinct results, by submitting votomat and/or changing the memory card or garbling the votes of canvass.

How could cheating be done in an automated election with Optical Mark Reading Machines?

At the municipal level, it could be done by creating fake voting ballots with fake votes, and by using fake ballot boxes. When the machine reads the fake ballots, it will generate fake election results. Admittedly, this will be more tedious than just changing results of the returns, or substituting the precincts with fake ones. But it can still be done.

Testing the machines before and after the count will not detect the fraud.

The other way to cheat in an automated election is by making changes in the election software. This is why we preferred a semi-manual system where the counting machines would be stand-alone units.

With stand-alone machines, it would be easier to detect the hacking of program changes. In the computerized system, it would be nearly impossible for outsiders like the opposition parties to detect such software changes.

Again, testing the machines before and after the election would be necessary, because the changes could be disseminated through the network just before the counting. At the end of counting, the honest program would be reinstated.

To make sure that this does not happen, we must depend on honest people from the media, contractors, and Comelec.

Since the manipulation could be happening electronically, having a dozen observers doing manual counting.

Changing structure

While we are on the topic of organizational change, let us ask, "Will changing management structure or organizational structure result in magical organization improvements?" The answer again is a resounding NO.

To have organizational improvements, we must also institute changes in other dimensions such as processes, technology, people, culture and values.

Business or national development projects, equitable distribution of resources, and honesty are less dependent on organization structure in form of government (presidential or parliamentary) than on people, mission and values.

Dishonesty in business and corruption in government is not swallowed by a mere change in organization structure.

People must have the will to get rid of it, and processes to detect and punish dishonesty and corruption must be implemented.

To minimize, organization improvements is not impossible through changes in only one organization dimension. One must institute changes along multiple dimensions. It will be difficult, but not impossible to do.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is President of Systems Synergy Consultants, Inc. Feedback at mapp@pldtdsl.net.ph)

Stock restrictions

Corporate Securities Info

Raoul J. Fababier

IT MUST BE very frustrating for a stockholder who is going through some financial problems as he wants to sell his shares to the highest bidder because of certain restrictions.

The general rule is, shares in a corporation are personal property and therefore they can be sold, transferred or disposed of in any manner its owner wants.

So it came as a big surprise to an owner of shares of stock in a fairly profitable company who wanted sort to learn that its internal rules require him to sell his holdings only to the employee-stockholders.

For obvious reasons, the employees who expressed interest in acquiring her shares wanted to buy them at a low price.

There were non-employees who felt the company had good earning potentials so they offered to buy her stocks for a much higher price.

But no amount of pleas for understanding could make the employee-stockholders increase their price or make her financial circumstances justifications for the temporary lifting of the restrictions.

Right of refusal

It is not uncommon for corporations to put clauses in their articles of incorporation that limit the ability of their stockholders to freely transfer their shareholdings.

Laboring under the theory that incorporators have the right to maintain the original mix of their group, some companies incorporate a "right of first refusal" provision in their corporate documents.

This means that any shareholder who plans to unload his shares is obliged to offer them first to whoever may be mentioned within the group (either be officers or members).

To avoid haggling on the selling price, the organizers of the corporation usually agree on a formula on the valuation of shares ahead of time. If no one wants or does not have the money to buy the shares being sold, the seller is free to look elsewhere for interested buyers.

Business matter

The restriction to the disposition of shares that has gained judicial recognition is that which prevents the sale of stocks of a company to people or entities with competing business interests, more popularly known in the legal circles as the "disharged" doctrine.

The reasonableness of restrictions imposed on the sale, assignment or conveyance of stocks has, as a member of stockholders, been ruled by affected shareholders with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Since this issue relates to the exercise of a business judgment on the appreciation of the commercial relationship among stockholders, the SEC has refrained from rendering an opinion on the propriety or soundness of these limitations.

Instead, the SEC leaves the attention of the stockholders concerned to Sec. 6 of the Corporation Code which states that "shares of stocks ... may have such rights, privileges or restrictions as may be stated in the articles of incorporation."

Contract

The articles of incorporation constitute the contract between the corporation and the people who have agreed to join or be part of it.

No person can be compelled against his will to sign a document whose contents he disagrees with. When forced or intimidated into doing so, the coerced signatory can invoke the nullity of his signature where the compulsive element has disappeared.

Thus, when a stockholder voluntarily affixes his signature to corporate documents that limit his ability to sell or dispose of his shares, he is deemed to have accepted that condition and therefore expected to comply with it.

Recognizing that some stockholders may not take interest in reading the articles of incorporation before parting with their money or are too trusting in corporate arrangements, the SEC has, as a matter of policy, required that restrictions on transfer of shares must be printed on the stock certificates themselves.

This information puts the stockholder on notice about the curbs that the corporation has imposed on his ability to transact on his stockholdings.

When that restriction does come out to be burdensome for him, he cannot complain that it is unaware or unfair.

(For comments or questions concerning this article, you may write to c-mail@inquirer.com.ph.)

REDISCOVERING a giant of theater /E1

LIFESTYLE

Editor-Chief: Banal-Formoso
Executive Editor: Lito B. Zulueta

Fun-Size P10

Fil Delacruz's kenotic, kinetic art

By Lito B. Zulueta

FIL DELACRUZ IS RETURNING to painting in grand style. But it's not really as if he had abandoned painting in the past.

More renowned for his sculpture, lithography and overall printmaking prowess, Delacruz is not a painter-dabbler. Like the best visual artists, he works in several mediums—almost at the same time.

And if there's a sign of greatness in him this early, his works, no matter the medium or genre, have acquired a thematic and artistic coherence. His artistic evolution has nothing been less than breathtaking. It could be said, in fact, that Delacruz now could lay claim to a fully developed iconography of his own.

The coherence is evident in his show "Sam-ha," which opens tomorrow night at The Crucible Gallery in SM Megamall. The all-or-wood works thematically take off from his explorations of dualism, unison, and the multi-orchestral spirit that appears as a common denominator among indigenous Filipino art-forms from each chosen as "Other-and-Unsung" (Ethnophilia) and "Balanse" (Animism). Alternately, the new show builds on Delacruz's strengths in draftsmanship, composition and color harmony.

Of course, there's something new in the show, its "canvas." Delacruz uses wood, especially lauhin (jackfruit) wood, which he paints as well as carves and chisels (which means he also puts to use his expert skill as a sculptor in the new works). The wood mostly comes from felled trees, and there's a poignant note here of death and destruction transformed into a resurrection of sorts by art's intrepid, life-endowing spirit.

The religious leitmotif, "worship," builds on Delacruz's explorations of pantheism, reverentism, folklore, and feminine spirit. In one seamless horizon, he portrays the reverential, worshipful spirit of man as basically feminine and woman, in addition, to the artist, the impersonated is natural, bravery basically basic-ed on the here and now.

The Catholic Christian sensibility may hold in the West Age proclivity of such a vision, but one must remember that even the Catholic liturgy is strong on the symbolic import of nature and creation.

Moreover, the Catholic cult of Mary draws here the natural dimension denounces Catholic mysticism.

Delacruz, after all, was a scholar at the University of Santo Tomas School of Fine Arts of the Dominican, (where pronounced the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Mother).

Autobiographical

But atheism is the truest spirit in all of this? To be sure, the spirit in women is seen through the versatility of a male seen like Delacruz.

In a way, there are intensely autobiographical works since Delacruz had lived with the Hinoba cultural communities in Sabar. Kadazan in Mindanao in the 1980s, and it was during this episode that he came into both natural and preternatural contact with the mythological shamis of the wilderness. The show is nothing short of an artistic confession by an artist whose gender otherwise is predisposed to narrative, sound, and resting on.

Ah, but there's really no relating to of Delacruz's compositional error, exquisite for realism, more-focused graphic boldness, and virtuoso adroitness.

The female figuration is confined mainly to visages, which, however, is marked by geometric embroidery that defines dramatic eyes with precision. When Delacruz tackles nudity, he melds the female form with flora, and the graceful anatomy is contrasted with the rich detailing of the foliage. It seems nature emerged from the woman's rich subdivision.

The colors range from rainbow hues to ecstatic earth tone and celebratory golds. But even here, Delacruz remains consistent with his iconography.

Gold, for example, is a color of royalty—and dignity...in indigenous Filipino cultures. In medieval culture, gold was a symbol of God as well as heavenly illumination; in short, wisdom. Heraldry, in both indigenous Filipino and Western societies/cultures, is a blending of the divine to achieve enlightenment and wisdom.

But all of this "end of the encapsulation" Like Tuppleti mystic Thomas Merton's phrase) is second on nature and the here and now; in the case of Delacruz's art, no stilled vessel: it is as if life has been spliced on the mouth of the dead (see remembers here

"SAGADA"

"PANAGPALA"

National Artist J. Elizalde Navarro's witty remark about Delacruz's gold-as-painting as reflection of life amid so much death in the art scene: "I am very glad that for the year of abundant bad and ho-hum art...Fil Delacruz brings to the art scene a sensuous and golden eye (pun-ished)."

It cannot be otherwise. Art as divinity means the artist giving up his divine attributes in order to support true humanity and natural transcendence. This is the theological formula, a thinning out of one's powers to form a solidarity with the fragile elements. The transformation and triumph, however, is achieved by Artistic, the sheer artistic energy of creation-demiurge.

The world becomes whole again and balance is restored. In almost all aspects of his creation, Delacruz reaffirms art's historic, human spirit.

"BUKIDNO (Umpring)"

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"WOMEN" I

Lydia Velasco, woman artist

By Joanna Marie Grace Barrera

FROM HER HUMBLE beginnings as a little vendor in Malabon to her serious entry in the art scene, Lydia Velasco unravels through her art the story of showcase struggling in eyes constantly under construction.

Evident in her art is an expressionist's attempt to liberate women from preconceived rules and stereotypical associations in a highly patriarchal society.

What she provides us is an alternative perspective on womanhood by depicting unconventional, provocative and intriguing women attributes. These portrayals of women combine a sensual, subtle and motherly touch.

Her impressions stem from both wonderful bits of her childhood and budding years to the deepest anxieties brewing inside her. She even recalls the time when she would watch her lola (farming region of flood out). She has painted works of women sprays creation.

She transforms women into full-bodied creatures to signify strength of character. The chinky eyes and dusty luscious red-tinted details to fluid yellowish tones and muscular

"DIVA"

forms. The strokes and contours that extend freely to her images evoke freedom.

Velasco's art is a progression of hues, emotions and style, even her identity. Her soul-searching is the urge to the early '90s began with absorbing western figures and painting broken bodies.

It was in 1995 when she achieved her breakthrough as an contemporaries, poses, critics and collectors noticed how remarkably well she could bring contrast to a canvas, using clothing threads of

"DANCE"

willow, grass and red tones while invoking together ideas both to rule between womanhood and sexual her inner selves.

She was raised in Navotas where she had to earn early on selling fish at the tailgate of truck by town Malabon to augment the meagre earnings of her father and help support the family. She further worked as a an designer for GN studios while her mother took care of the home and reared her older siblings.

"Gagang kalabaw kami noon dahil sa bukirin," she pronounces.

She took up Fine Arts major in Advertising at the University of Sto. Tomas and worked under prominent art illustrators such as Cesar Legaspi and Gil Ocampo. She was part of Chamber's art group as signed in creating storyboards for soap commercials. Even then, she cheated an inclination toward women figures.

Lydia ventured to painting in 1995. She studies Enday Marbina, a group of artists supporting the young art enthusiasts of the city. She is also a member of Malang's Everyday Group of Artists.

Velasco will have an exhibition, "La Donna," which will open on Jan. 25 at the Centro Gallery of Cuisine Incognito. The show will feature 15 figurative paintings showing the evolution of Velasco's art.

"La Donna" will run until Feb. 8. Gallery Joaquin is at 371 J's Corner

Ay Si Ko Si Monsour Love, Addition Hills, San Juan. Call 7260527 or 7259918.

Visit www.galeriajoaquin.com or e-mail info@galeriajoaquin.com.

LEWANDA LIM

Her painterly fabrications

By Constantino C. Tejero

TECHNOPHOBIA OF FILIPINO ISSUING AND cultural disease's fragrance only in a few fields such as theater, education, medicine, science and technology. The sad fact is, it extends even to art.

You keep wondering why an accomplished artist like Ruedi Piquemal, for example, no longer holds exhibits, until you learn this man has gone to the Middle East for some advertising job. Multiply such incident by scores and you'll have a fair estimate of the loss to Philippine art.

Fortunately, other these priests do not stop if we are making, and living away from their homeland. Only recently Lim made an debut where they venues they bring with them powerful works.

Such is the case of UP-based painter and printmaker Lewanda Lim, who is holding her first solo exhibit in the country this month.

Lim graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, where she taught for many years before moving to Canada in the mid-1970s. She took her master's degree in Studio Art at the State University of New York, and held solo exhibitions in Massachusetts, Philadelphia, New York.

Now living in Ohio, Lim has returned to the local art scene after almost 30 years in income "Lewanda's Adventures," a 13-piece re-mastered history, until Jan. 28 in Silverio Gallery at the Avenue, 671 Bldg. A, 3M Kingsroad, Mandaluyong City.

These are fabric collages of variegated hues and forms, recovering between tapestry and tarpaper. Not quite Pedro Abad's regional art, and far from Imelda Cajipe-Endaya's assemblages of textile remedies, Lim's is never the less painterly in design.

While she explores in oil and acrylic and in print (collograph, etching, monotype) a variety of styles from abstract expressionism to realism (and Afro, handwoven, pressed screen with political or environmental commentaries), these collages are chiefly abstracted yet hinting at figures.

In the geometrical abstraction of "Shiva Bronze," for instance, one perceives identifiable shapes, two floating forms

"HARANI Sawarlo"

suggesting planes and woman-one can see opposite the arm.

These pieces are notable for their bold color tonality as in the contrasting harmonies of "Native Bronze" and "Easy Rhythm." The former's cool harmony of blue, green and violet accented with splashes of red and yellow is a stark contrast to—indeed, a reverse of—the latter's rich warm harmony of red, orange and yellow accentuated with blue and green.

These collages were created in six years. The artist reveals how she came up with her techniques: "One day I was challenged by the tangles of knitting and embroidery threads that settled in my fabric and sewing boxes. And I didn't want to throw them away. Suddenly a ball lit up in my head, and, presto, I started cutting up the threads and randomly dropping them on a plain fabric."

The exhibit's information sheet relates: "She sat there at the sewing machine to sit directions, until she achieved an entirely new surface and fabric, and added different levels of fabric to create forms that would anchor her compositions. This 'Lewanda's Original Threadable Art' was born, gracing the Textile Museum in Washington, DC, and a prestigious artisan gallery along Madison Avenue in New York."

"KEST Mapalad"

Dadivas at Mandarin, Gabuco at Y, Ramirez at Metro, Montera in Cebu

IMPRESSIONIST LIZ HERCILLES

Dadivas another son, Oliver John Dadivas, recently held a joint exhibit with artist-architect Benito "Bino" Montera, dean of the UP College of Fine Arts, at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Makati. In the event, they were given recognition by the Philippine-Austrian Cultural Society through Austrian Ambassador Ingeborg Jaeger for their artistic contributions. The works can be viewed

"VEIL," by Caley Gabuco

"BASKET of Flowers I," by Luz Hercilles-Dadivas

VISUAL ARTS

until Jan. 31. Call 8813-3333 or 8891-0161.

DILEY Gabuco will host an exhibit of new works on Jan. 27-Feb. 8 at Gallerie Y (#3 3M Megamall). The mixed-media works of Mother and Child images as well as still lifes and landscapes.

FRED Ramirez will hold his solo exhibition at the Metro Gallery (7F Rockwell Tower in Makati. The exhibit is largely autobiographical and presents labor-intensive works on such themes as historical progression, spiritual awakening, social transformation and transition. The exhibit runs until Feb. 11. Call 8521 7139 loc. 3001.

E.R. SEELS will hold an art workshop to introduce the use of charcoal, watercolor, oil pastel and mixed media, with focus on subjects such as family unity, food work, fear of food and care for the environment. Call 8512 0922 or 0927-6572288.

"GREEN Mango," by Fred Ramirez

Inquiries in the show "Shifting Planes" on Jan. 31 at The Gallery, 3/F, Manila Peninsula Hotel. The exhibit will feature 30 works, a mix of black-and-white urban genetic prints and digital prints, and assemblage/installations, from Jan. 28 to Feb.

Concert to benefit Bohol church conservation

THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED Lobec Children's Choir will perform in a benefit concert, "Himin sa mga Anit: A Dinaw Concert," on Jan. 28 in Dimiao, Bohol.

The concert is part of the fiesta celebration of Dimiao. It will take place on the ocean church plaza by the seaside.

The concert will formally establish and launch the Sacerdotes Shrine Heritage Fund, which will seek for the restoration and preservation of the historic Roman Catholic church and convent of Dimiao.

Donations of P500, P1,000 and P5,000 will be accepted by the foundation during the event.

Aside from the Lobec Children's Choir, performers include the Dimiao Rondalla, a group of public elementary pupils from the municipality of Alicia.

A Baroque parade carrying the image of Our Lady of the Assumption will be held on Jan. 29 at Sitio Biasong in Barangay Tabalong.

Donations to the Heritage Fund may be sent to Assumption of Our Lady Shrine, Dimiao, Bohol. Call (038) 5022006.

LOBEC Children's Choir

Lecture and new book by Benedict Anderson

ANDY, PUBLISHING INC. AND THE National Museum will host the lecture-book launch of "Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination" by Benedict Anderson, Jan. 24, at the Tambuyong Hall, Museum of the Filipino People, National Museum.

The first part of the launch is the "Pang-ulo" lecture, part of a series of activities for the celebration of Philippine Ideas about Heads, Headwear and Heads of Government.

"Under Three Flags" explores the impact of avant-garde European literature and politics on Rizal and his contemporary, the pioneering Filipino intellectuals de los Reyes, who was deported to Manila after the execution uprisings of 1896, and later incarcerated, together with Catalan anarchists, in the fortress of Montjuich in Barcelona.

Anderson considers the complex intellectual connections of these young Filipinos with the term "horror" of anthropology in Germany and Austro-Hungary, and with post-Communard experimentalists in Paris, against a background of influences stemming from Spain, France, Italy and the Americas. And Rizal's account, speaking to Cuba, and anti-imperialist protests in China and Japan. Thus, he depicts the dense intertwining of an ardent internationalism and radical anti-colonialism.

Anderson is professor emeritus of International Studies at Cornell University.

Call Anvil at 7471622. The book will be sold at special launching prices of P395 and P380 during the launch.

Integrating heritage with development policy

Conservation means conserving not only the structures but also the original living patterns within such structures

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto C. Villalon

Outdated

CHINA PASSIONATELY rejected the decaying heritage architecture in its old cities, pulled them all down quickly for instant replacement with towering structures.

However, after a couple of decades of rapid expansion and modernization, China has learned to value its architectural heritage and to see to it that neighborhoods of old architecture have an important place in modern China.

The old neighborhoods give cues China an identity, a link with their rich history of the Chinese people, and a validation that, despite the highly modernized lifestyle in Chinese cities today, the traditional living patterns so seen in old houses remain applicable in today's lifestyle.

Throughout, the old houses in a traditional neighborhood were conserved and treated to become visitor's Mecca, a widely successful entertainment-shopping destination that combines old and new with stunning architectural results. Financially the development is a success as well, proving that money can, indeed, be earned from conservation.

Today it is one of the most popular destinations for locals and tourists in the city, a visible example of how old architecture can continue to serve our 2006 lifestyle.

The Beitaidi example, contrary to popular belief, proves that conservation is progressive. It does not freeze a city and its people in their past. Although conservationalists look beyond, it brings the city forward into the future, which is the rationale behind the development of a successful heritage and development plan.

Forcing residents into an old life purely simply because they happen to live in a heritage area goes against development goals. It prevents their successful integration into the 21st century.

Equally residents of heritage neighborhoods are forced to relocate. Their abandoned houses become the nucleus of a underdeveloped neighborhood that changes in use from residential to commercial without considering that residents have the right to benefit from neighborhood improvements.

During the Beitaidi recycling process, the attention was solely on conserving and restoring the heritage structures without consideration for the original residents who eventually were displaced. The Gutaidi setting was conserved without respect of the original living patterns.

Conservation practice today looks at conserving both the heritage structures and—as much as possible—the original living patterns that had taken place within them so that everyone would benefit—city, developers, and residents/stakeholders.

In considering the content of development guidelines vis-à-vis conservation of heritage, these are guidelines that illustrate various approaches to the issue. A suggested reference list:

- "The Venice Charter," International Council on Monuments and Sites (Icomos), Paris.
- "Historic Towns Overview," Icomos, Paris.
- "Vernacular Architecture," Icomos, Paris.
- "The Burra Charter," Icomos, Australia.
- "Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China," The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, CA, USA.
- "Bai-Ao Charter," Icomos, Bangkok.
- "Preservation Districts for Groups of Machiya Buildings in Kyoto," City Planning Bureau, Kyoto, Japan.
- "Yogyakarta Regulation about Building," Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- "Ordinance 4914, An Ordinance Enacting the Preservation and Conservation Guidelines for Vigan Ancestral Houses," Vigan (Word Heritage Property), Philippines.
- "PD 1616, Revising and Regulations Governing the Development of Intramuros," Manila, Philippines.
- "Conservation Guidelines and Technical Supplements," Urban Redevelopment Authority of Singapore.
- "Maintaining Historic Buildings," Bureau of Parks Service (USA), Department of the Interior.
- "Preparing a Historic Preservation Ordinance," Report No. 2574, American Planning Association Advisory Service.

The time is right to begin thinking of development proposals that are sensitive to heritage conservation as a means of improving quality of life and establishing a sense of pride of place among Filipinos. Such programs may even result in the Filipino understanding of the sacredness of his ordinary, something to sadly lacking in the psyche of today's population.

And to bring everything into reality, why not update a project to serve as a model to prove that it is possible for all sectors to work together toward development and heritage conservation.

E-mail the author at pdf-dialogue@hotmail.com

Unique book on Pampanga

A UNIQUE TWO-VOLUMES-IN-ONE book on Pampanga will be launched on Jan. 28, at Casa Roces, U. Professor of Literature Philip Holt Angeli University, in Angeles City.

The book, by Alice Guillo, will be presented by the Juan R. Hidalgo Center for Kapampangan Studies, of which Guillo is a consultant researcher on arts.

Multicolored's history unfolds on the first part of the book, "Scenes from a Bygone Town and Other Views," which pieces together the town history from diverse primary historical sources in the unpublished Lolita Bichar Collection, Historical Data Papers, archival materials obtained for the Center from the National Library like the Inventario municipal de la Provincia Pampanga, canonical books on microfilm as well as from the bi-annual unpublished manuscript on Multicolored.

When the book is flipped over, it becomes "Views from the Pampanga and Other Scenes," a visual feast of essays based on the author's vast collection of Kapampangan-themed pictures mixed with brought by time.

Behind the book launching are Multicolor Mayor Librado P. Morales and Pampanga board member Dr. Frisgerio Lapuz. All while Gil V. Reyes will deliver remarks.

Guillo is a Makati-based advertising executive who will quit home to his native Multicolor during weekends. He hails from this town. This is his first book and is being talked to his course which is scheduling in March birthday on Feb. 2.

British Council hosts youth camp

THE BRITISH COUNCIL is hosting the Young Global Citizens Camp in Davao as part of its Connecting the Futures program.

The program aims to facilitate dialogue between young people in the UK and other countries so that they can explore their own and each other's identities and learn more about matters of concern to them.

The Young Global Citizen's Camp seeks to empower potential young leaders to become catalysts for positive changes in their communities.

The camp is going on at Davao's Eden Nature Park and Resort, until Jan. 29. Fifty young people from the UK, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines are taking part.

Call Sameere Bhimjee (0917-8551961 or Bernie Ventura (0918-9388788/(02)954-1811 loc. 1546.

Apostol lectures on journalism amid crises

EUGENIA DUBAS-APOSTOL, FOUNDING publisher of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, will deliver the third annual UST Teresitian-Jose Villa Bergonzellan (JBP) Professorial Chair in Journalism Lecture on Jan. 27, 2 p.m., at the Thomasian Alumni Research Center auditorium, UST campus, España, Manila.

Editor and publisher of 9th and 5th Wigtime, Apostol will lecture on responsible journalism amid crises in the Philippines.

Apostol was the Outstanding Thomasian Alumnus in media in 1999. She graduated magna cum laude from UST in 1964 with a degree in Lit. B in Journalism. She received the Knight International Press Fellowship Lifetime Achievement Award from the Washington-based International Center for Journalists, and the first Gawad Haridel, the award given by the UP College of Mass Communication for lifetime achievement in journalism.

The JBP Chair was established by the Institute, the 76-year-old official student paper of University of Santo Tomas, as an annual lecture on current issues on journalism and the media arts. The chair honors the late José Villa Bergonzellan, founder of the Varsitarian.

Bergonzellan, a June 12, 1963 Lit. B graduate, was a writer, journalist, linguist, lexicographer, radio personality, scholar and translator. He served as director of the old Institute of National Language (now the Komisyon ng Wikang) and is acknowledged as one of the foremost promoters and developers of the national language.

The lecture is open to the public. Call 406-1611 loc. 8223 and look for Isha Chua/S.T. Reyes (0905-3817811). E-mail us at varsitan@yahoo.com.

PWU recital

CLARISSE BELLESSES OF THE Philippine Women's University Junior student of pianist Jonathan Co, now under Melinda Rivera, will be hosting her junior recital at the Gymnastic Rotary Hall, PWU, Taft Ave., Manila, on Jan. 28, 7 p.m.

Claire, who started learning piano at the age of four, won a grand prize winner at the 2004 Piano Duo Competition and a finalist in the National Music Competition for Young Artists (Instrumental Festival, Piano Competition Category C. She is finishing her Bachelor's degree, majoring in Performance, at the PWU Technical Music.

She will be playing French Suite No. 5 in G Major, by J.S. Bach; Sonata Duet Una Petenale, Sonata in Eb Major, Op. 27 No. 1, by L.V. Beethoven; Intermezzo(ed) Slade in F Minor, by Franz Liszt; Fantasiestucke, Op. 111, by R. Schumann; "Warning," by Claude Santos, Damian Argentum, by Alberto Ginastera; and Concerto in Bb Major, K456, by W.A. Mozart.